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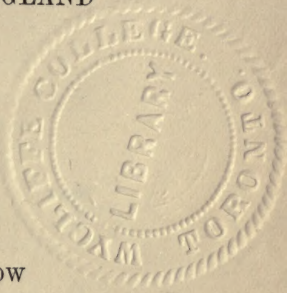
BEING ESSAYS ON

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



BY

Dr WACE	Professor MOULE
Dean FARRAR	Chancellor SMITH
Dr WRIGHT	MONTAGUE BARLOW
Rev. R. E. BARTLETT	Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Bart.
Principal DRURY	E. H. BLAKENEY
Canon MEYRICK	J. T. TOMLINSON

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD

SECOND EDITION, REVISED

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
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CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION vii

By the Lord Bishop of Hereford.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF PROTESTANTISM . . . 1

By the Rev. Henry Wace, D.D., late Principal of King's College, London; Chaplain to the Queen.

CHRIST'S TEACHING AND THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH . . 53

By the Very Rev. F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., Dean of Canterbury.

THE VOICE OF THE FATHERS 77

By the Rev. Charles H. H. Wright, D.D., M.A., Ph.D., Bampton Lecturer (1878), and Grinfield Lecturer on the Septuagint (1893-97) in the University of Oxford, Donnellan Lecturer (1880-81), University of Dublin, &c., &c.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH 129

By the Rev. R. E. Bartlett, M.A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and Bampton Lecturer, 1888.

THE LORD'S SUPPER 163

By the Rev. T. W. Drury, M.A., Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge; formerly Principal of the Church Missionary College, Islington.

THE CONFESSIONAL 207

By the Rev. Frederick Meyrick, M.A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, Rector of Blickling, and non-residentiary Canon of Lincoln.

TESTS OF TRUE RELIGION 259
By the Rev. HANDLEY C. G. MOULE, D.D., late Principal of Ridley Hall, Norrisian Professor of Divinity, and Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge.

THE LAITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND . . . 285
By P. V. SMITH, LL.D., Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester.

AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED 325
By MONTAGUE BARLOW, M.A., LL.M., Official Principal to the Archdeacon of London.

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND 365
By the Right Hon. Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Bart., G.C.S.I., D.C.L. (Oxon.), LL.D. (Cantab.), F.R.S.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION 399
By E. H. BLAKENEY, M.A., Headmaster of Sir Roger Manwood's Grammar-School, Sandwich, Kent.

APPENDIX.

THE REFORMATION SETTLEMENT 441
By J. T. TOMLINSON, Author of 'Lay Judges in Church Courts,' 'The Prayer-Book: Articles and Homilies,' &c.

INDEX 475

INTRODUCTION.

In the autumn of last year some efforts were made to bring about a conference between men who belong to different sections of our Church, with the hope of removing mutual misunderstandings, and so composing differences and promoting a spirit of goodwill.

These well-meant efforts failed, as was inevitable under the circumstances; but the attempt may serve to remind us that the method most likely to attain this end, and in some degree to fulfil the hopes then expressed, is the plain declaration of fundamental principles and facts, a full and frank exposition of what we hold to be the truth, and a dispassionate examination of points of difference.

Even if such a method fails to convince some readers, it has the undoubted recommendation that it helps to clear the air, and causes men to look afresh to the grounds of their belief and practice.

It is in fact the true educational method, and furnishes the only sure basis for any practical eirenicon.

The essays in this book may claim to be an endeavour in

that direction; and, as such, they deserve to be welcomed and studied.

The writers, it will be observed, do not belong to any one party in the Church, or one particular school of thought. Their standpoint is simply that of men who, basing their faith, as all members of the Church of England profess to do, on the rock of Holy Scripture, desire to set forth the truths of the Gospel and the history and principles of our Church, as they have come to be read, and must in future be read, in the light of modern knowledge and by those methods of dispassionate study which are now accepted as the only sure and safe guides to truth, whether in history or theology, or in any other branch of learning.

In this connection a word should be said as to the spirit or temper in which the volume has been written and is submitted to the judgment of its readers.

This spirit, if I have rightly understood it, could hardly find a more appropriate expression than in the words of a private prayer of Archbishop Tillotson, which I venture to place in the forefront, as being at once a fitting introduction to the book, and likely to help those who may read it in their study of its contents:—

"O Lord God of Truth, I humbly beseech Thee to enlighten my mind by Thy Holy Spirit, that I may discern the true way to eternal salvation; and to free me from all prejudice and passion, from every corrupt affection and interest that may either blind or seduce me in search after it.

"Make me impartial in my inquiry after truth, and ready, whenever it is discovered to me, to receive it in

the love of it, to obey it from the heart, and to practise it in my life, and to continue steadfast in the profession of it to the end of my days.

"I resign myself, O Lord, to Thy conduct and direction, in confidence that Thy mercy and goodness is such that Thou wilt not suffer those who sincerely desire to know the truth and rely upon Thy guidance finally to miscarry.

"And if, in anything which concerns the true worship and service of Thee, my God, I am in any error and mistake, I earnestly beg of Thee to convince me of it, and to lead me into the way of truth, and to confirm and establish me in it daily more and more."

In the cause of vital truth or in exposing the drift of a dangerous tendency, it may be necessary for a writer to say some hard things; but my hope is that by no turn of phrase or expression will anything in this book cause needless pain to any conscientious reader who may have been led to hold views which are here shown to be erroneous. If we are, any of us, to arrive at a clear and true understanding of the deeper things of our moral and spiritual life, or to realise that relationship of mutual charity and goodwill which is of the essence of a true Christianity, we must learn on the one hand to hold and express our convictions with all due courtesy towards those who differ from us, and on the other hand to read and study the views of those who may belong to some other camp than our own, with a sincere desire to understand them, and with a mind set free as far as possible from all presuppositions and prejudices.

I venture to press these considerations, because the great-

est of all obstacles in the way of a true and progressive Christianity is so commonly found to be the influence of theological or ecclesiastical prejudices and prepossessions. There seems, indeed, to be no soil in which these grow so universally as in that of our theological and ecclesiastical affairs.

They seem to be born with us as a sort of inheritance, truly a *damnosa hereditas*, the outcome of those evil tempers that have been bred in the conflicts of Church parties in past times, and are apt to be fostered and embittered and sown afresh in the controversies of the moment.

Under these influences writers, readers, teachers, followers, all alike, are tempted to overlook the fact that our first duty, as we examine the basis of our faith, is to clear the mind from the influence of presuppositions, and to read the language of our Lord and His apostles, and to deal with the facts of history and of experience in the temper, not of an advocate maintaining a thesis or seeking to buttress up and confirm a preconceived opinion or an inherited tradition, but of an open-minded and dispassionate seeker after a true understanding of the things that have been revealed or written for our learning.

The writers of this book have endeavoured to approach their several subjects in this impartial, truth-seeking spirit. How far they have succeeded it is for the dispassionate reader to decide.

The need of such a volume is obvious. What is variously described as the Ritualist, or Neo-Anglican, or Neo-Catholic movement renders it necessary to emphasise afresh the

Reformed and Protestant character of our Church, and to show once more that this, and not a revived medievalism, represents the true conception of the Church of Christ.

The original Oxford movement may be said in a sense to have run its course. Its first impulse has spent itself and brought us to a new parting of the ways. The higher and better influences of that movement have in a large degree been absorbed into the main body of the Church, and these influences, thus absorbed, may have modified, but they have in no way destroyed, its Reformed and Protestant character. On the other hand, it must be generally recognised that they have in various ways invigorated and enriched its life.

To this movement we owe an increased and more pervading sense of reverence in both religious worship and common life, that feeling of which Ruskin has spoken so eloquently as the highest moral feeling.

We have also to acknowledge our indebtedness to it for a higher conception of the Church as a continuous and world-wide society of believers held together in a mystical spiritual brotherhood by a sacramental union in Christ.

Thus the spiritual life of England has been both deepened and enriched by the influences of this movement.

But there were tares in the sowing as well as wheat. The seeds of error that were latent in it have unhappily grown at the same time with its other growths, and have gradually developed into the retrograde tendencies of a ritualistic sacerdotalism, which is in essentials hardly distinguishable from that of the Roman Church, and, if allowed free course, would in all human probability produce similar results.

The section of the clergy which has come under the influence of this stream of tendency has been very earnest in propaganda and socially prominent, and it has for a considerable period been left to work steadily, and in many points of vantage, to wipe out the Protestant character of the Church of England, and to revive under the vague and consequently misleading name of Catholic the Church of the darker ages, with its rule of sacerdotal authority over the individual conscience, its encouragement of the confessional, its doctrine of the Mass, its baseless dogmas about the state of the dead, and its imposing symbolic and spectacular worship.

All this is fascinating to weak and emotional natures, and to a luxurious and sensation-loving society; but to any thoughtful person, who understands what English life owes to the Reformation, it is clear that hardly any greater misfortune could befall our Church and nation than the success of such an endeavour. It amounts to an attempt to put back the clock of Christian progress and enlightenment three centuries or more, an attempt which aims at what is happily impossible among an educated people who have learnt to value spiritual freedom.

The cleavage between this retrogressive party in the Church and those who hold to the Reformed Protestant faith is, when carefully examined, found to be a fundamental cleavage. To ignore this or minimise it in a spirit of temporising opportunism is little short of an infidelity.

The cure for it is to be sought first in a more faithful and fearless insistence on the true meaning of the New Testament, as set forth by our greatest Biblical interpreters,

Lightfoot and Hort, and the school of devout, unprejudiced students whom they represent; and, secondly, in an equally faithful relegation to their proper place of all those ecclesiastical aftergrowths and traditions which, having their origin in personal idiosyncrasies or in times of ignorance, have overlaid the Christianity of the Gospel or adulterated it with erroneous notions and inferences. In one word, what we need is the better education of both clergy and laity.

Looking to the causes of this cleavage between the Ritualist party and the main body of Churchmen,—and it is useless to treat of these matters unless we endeavour to arrive at the causes of difference or error,—it has to be admitted that one main cause seems to lie in the education of a considerable portion of our clergy. This has gradually become an education or training of a pronounced and somewhat narrow seminarist type, strongly ecclesiastical in tone and spirit, rather than Biblical.

The tendency of such a system is to send forth men whose views have been formed in a highly artificial atmosphere, and who, moreover, are for the most part untrained in the exact methods of study required for the true understanding of ecclesiastical history and of Holy Scripture, as of all other subjects. This fact makes the training and the tone of every Theological College a matter of primary concern to all who have regard for the future of the Church and its influence on the national life.

Ritualists trained in this seminarist atmosphere have been heard to boast that they have in effect captured a large proportion of the clerical Training Colleges, so that other

things are of secondary moment. If this be in any sense a true boast, it deserves the most serious attention, because a Ritualistic atmosphere and tone, and a corresponding selection of the books to be studied during the impressionable period of training for Holy Orders, and under the personal influence of earnest and good men, tend inevitably to strengthen and perpetuate the power over the mind of the doctrines that underlie the atmosphere.

Whether it is altogether a wise and prudent thing to make such a boast is another matter, as it amounts to a direct challenge to every bishop who may have a Theological College in his diocese to look carefully and see to it that the teaching given and the practices encouraged are in accordance with the spirit of the Prayer-Book, and that the atmosphere corresponds to the open air of our comprehensive Anglican Church.

In any case such a boast is opportune as directing the public mind to the dangers that are always inherent in the growth of seminarist institutions of whatever type; and it seems to indicate that the Bishops might do a real service to the Church if they were to assume a more direct and joint responsibility for the training of the clergy, and to supersede the present system of small Theological Colleges, which is to a great extent a system of practically independent private seminaries, by institutions on a broader basis, and of a more public character, more open to the general influences of our comprehensive Church, and less distinctly marked by the stamp and tone of this or that party in it.

A continuing cleavage between a seminarist clergy and

an educated laity can end in nothing but disaster to the Church and to the religious life of the nation; and it may be taken as certain, history and experience alike attesting it, that this cleavage will continue and deepen, unless the principles established as the result of the Reformation struggle are faithfully maintained.

What the Reformation really banished from our Church, and the earnest and enthusiastic Neo-Catholic reactionaries seem to insist on bringing back again, is the unscriptural doctrine of a divinely ordered priestly authority over the conscience of believers, carrying with it the confessional, priestly absolution, and priestly direction, the surrender of weak souls to sacerdotal guidance, the suppression of personal freedom and direct responsibility to God, and an elaborate system of sensuous and symbolical worship.

It has been said of the ancient Greek that he looked up to heaven as he prayed, whereas the Roman veiled his head. The distinction is typical of the difference between the two types of Christianity that stand opposed in Western Europe.

Protestantism lives, so to speak, out of doors, under the open heavens, turning to the light, looking to the hills, not backward but onward, in harmony with the spirit of progress, and adjusting itself to it, and in this as in other ways testifying to its true appreciation of the revelation and the Spirit of Christ.

Over against it, and striving to turn men's faces back towards the darker ages, we see a religion of obscurantism, which would check aspiration by the voice of human authority and ecclesiastical tradition, and putting forth,

as its fundamental claim, the claim of special powers for a sacerdotal order.

But the best modern students of the New Testament have made it abundantly clear that there is no Biblical foundation for these sacerdotal claims or for the doctrine of the Mass which goes with them,—that they are, in fact, ecclesiastical aftergrowths of very various origin; and it may be safely predicted that as this becomes more generally understood, the Church of England will the more resolutely refuse to have any return to these claims arbitrarily imposed upon her by any section of her official ministers.

If we pass on from Holy Scripture to the lessons of history and experience, we see how the whole history of Europe, and the present condition of such countries as France, Italy, and Spain, furnish an object-lesson to warn us against all attempts to go back to a sacerdotal regulation of moral and spiritual life. By this immutable evidence of fact and consequence sacerdotalism stands condemned; and the attempt to reimpose it on the English Church with all its apparatus of auricular confession, and the subjection of the individual conscience to priestly rule and ecclesiastical traditions, is neither more nor less than an invitation to turn our backs on Biblical truth, as now understood by its most enlightened exponents, and upon moral and social progress as we have seen this progress working in European life by virtue of the spiritual freedom which was won through the Reformation uprising.

The words of one or two impartial students of modern life and society may, I trust, help to carry conviction on this point:—

"The exact manner," says the author of 'Social Evolution,' "in which the Reformation movement has influenced, and is still influencing, our social and political development is seldom clearly perceived.

"By this movement, the character of the people had, in fact, not only been deepened and strengthened, it had been softened to an extent hitherto unknown. It is probable that the changes in doctrine which had principally contributed to produce this result were those which had tended to bring the individual into more intimate contact with the actual life and example of the Founder of Christianity, and therefore with the essential spirit that underlay our religious system and served to distinguish it from all other systems. As has been often correctly pointed out, the characteristic feature of Latin Christianity was different. This form has always tended, as it still tends, to treat as of the first importance, not the resulting change in character in the individual, but rather his belief in the authority of the Church and of an order of men, and in the supreme efficacy of sacramental ordinances which the Church has decreed itself alone competent to dispense. On the other hand, the central idea of the Reformation was the necessity for a spiritual change in the individual, and the recognition, in virtue thereof, of the priesthood in his own person.

"Thus, on the one hand, individual character tended to be greatly strengthened by the isolation of individual responsibility, and on the other, to be deepened and softened by being brought into close and intimate contact with those wonderfully moving and impressive altruistic ideals which

we have in the simple story of the life and acts of the Founder of Christianity.

"The resulting difference in character, which may mean much or little in theological controversy according to the standpoint of the observer, assumes, however, profound importance in the eyes of the student of our social evolution. The fact must be kept in view which has been throughout insisted on, that it is this softening and deepening of character, with the accompanying release in our social life of an immense and all-pervading fund of altruistic feeling, which has provided the real motive force behind the whole onward movement with which our age is identified. It may be noticed, consequently, how much further the development of the humanitarian feelings has progressed in those parts of our civilisation most affected by the movement of the sixteenth century, and more particularly amongst the Anglo-Saxon peoples."

Another writer no less weighty, Professor Marshall of Cambridge, has thus described the influence of the Reformed faith on life and character:—

"Man was, as it were, ushered straight into the presence of his Creator with no human intermediary; life became intense and full of awe; and now for the first time large numbers of rude and uncultured people yearned towards the mysteries of absolute spiritual freedom.

"The isolation of each person's religious responsibility from that of his fellows, rightly understood, was a necessary condition for the highest spiritual progress; but the notion was new to the world, it was bare and naked, not yet overgrown with pleasant instincts.

"Individualism had to be purified and softened by much tribulation; it had to become less self-assertive, without becoming weaker, before new instincts could grow up around it to revive in a higher form what was most beautiful and most solid in the old collective tendencies. Individualism governed by the temper of the Reformed religion intensified family life, making it deeper and purer and holier than it had ever been before.

"The family affections of those races which have adopted the Reformed religion are the richest and fullest: there never has been before any material of texture at once so strong and so fine with which to build up a noble fabric of social life."

As we reflect on these things we may well say with Bishop Lightfoot, that "after every deduction made for its defects, the Reformation has been fraught with incomparably great blessings, religious, social, intellectual, political, to England and to the world. If the foundation of the Church is the first cause of thankfulness, the Reformation of the Church must be the second."

These various estimates of the purifying and bracing effects of the Reformation on the life and society of those nations that have come under its influence are highly significant reminders that we should be very careful not to do anything to vitiate this inheritance.

They show us how profoundly important it is to hold fast to the cardinal principles of spiritual freedom thus vindicated, and to warn the partially educated and the unthinking of the dangers inherent in erroneous doctrine and in all practices that are meant to symbolise such doctrine.

It may be doubted whether those in authority in Church and State have at all times adequately realised these dangers.

As regards this attempt to go behind the Reformation and alter the character of the Church, under the plausible but misleading plea of a return to Catholic usage and a revival of Catholic doctrine, there has, indeed, been some want of foresight: due attention has hardly been given to the warning contained in our Lord's parable of the seed growing secretly.

If, then, we really believe that our Reformed faith is based on the true understanding of Holy Writ, and is consequently the faith which comes nearest to the truth; if we believe it to be, as indeed history has shown it to be, most productive of all that is best in our personal, domestic, and national life,—it behoves us to be careful of the type, and to do our part to save the young, the ignorant, the half educated, and the emotional, from being unwittingly led back into erroneous forms of belief and their attendant ceremonies and superstitions.

It is not enough to rest on the undoubted fact that history and the enlightened conscience of the more educated have condemned them, or that the growing intelligence of the modern world has discarded the priestly system of the Middle Ages, as a system weighed in the balance and found wanting, condemned alike by its lack of Biblical authority, by its hostility to advancing knowledge, and by its effect upon those countries in which it has had free course.

In the interests of truth and progress the weaker and

more ignorant members of the Church have again and again to be warned against it.

These need the reminder that every new endeavour to reimpose upon the Church the usages, the doctrines, and the sacerdotal claims of medieval times, as if they had some sort of divine sanction or authority, is based on fundamental error; and, if the evidence of history and experience is worth anything at all, it will be disastrous to the cause of religion, should it prevail: disastrous, because it leads weak natures into superstition, and drives the stronger into religious indifference or antagonism to the Church.

To save our English life from the dangers involved in this recrudescence of the medieval spirit, we look not to the method of heavy-handed repression, but to the better, wider, more liberal, and truer education of the clergy.

And, meanwhile, we believe in the efficacy of patience, a tolerant spirit, and free discussion, leading up to constitutional reform.

Being resolved not to go back behind the Reformation settlement, we do well to bear in mind the policy of Queen Elizabeth, which secured it.

She was most anxious, we are told, to have her people on her side; and, having this, she took care to deal as lightly as possible with those who shrank from abandoning the faith of their childhood.

This policy succeeded, and our position to-day is somewhat analogous to hers.

Those who would maintain the Reformed faith may certainly claim that they have the people on their side, the

instinct for freedom keeping them true to their Protestant position.

Those who are opposed to the Reformation and have brought about the controversies of the moment belong as a rule to that class of men who look not to what is expedient, but to what they believe to be true; and, bearing in mind the tendency in an established Church, and especially among the official classes, to become opportunist in character, thinking primarily of peace and the avoidance of difficulties rather than of fundamental truths, we should not forget that we stand indebted to these earnest men for a purifying and invigorating element in our life, which would be wanting if all were content to put peace in the first place, and to leave questions of truth in the background.

Having, then, to deal above all with matters of conscience, it is our wisdom, as it is our duty, to show all possible consideration.

The conscience may in some cases seem to us to be fanatical, or ill informed, or curiously perverted; but it is, after all, in those who are true to their conscience that we find the salt of the earth.

And so, while in duty bound to expose the errors of the Ritualistic teaching and the dangers inherent in it, and also to do whatever may be necessary to secure the rights of lay Church people in their parishes, we desire to maintain in all things the spirit of tolerance and mutual consideration.

"Mistakes in religion are to be tenderly used, and conscience ought to be pitied when it cannot be relieved."

J. HEREFORD.

THE

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF PROTESTANTISM.

By the Rev. HENRY WACE, D.D.

I.

THIS contribution towards a better apprehension, at the present time, of the meaning of Protestantism is conceived in the spirit of what may be regarded as a parting commission from the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Benson. In September 1896 the Archbishop paid a visit to Ireland, and at the first public meeting he attended, held in Dublin in aid of the restoration of Kildare Cathedral, he saw opposite the platform a motto, which described the Church of Ireland as "Catholic, Apostolic, Reformed, and Protestant." He took occasion to say that we, in England, have not been careful enough to teach our children and the mass of our people the history of the Church of England. "I hope," he said, "we have awakened lately to this matter, and we are now intending to do it far

Archbishop Benson in Ireland.

more thoroughly. To you," he added, "the appeal comes most strongly, and you cannot justify those four words, 'Catholic,' 'Apostolic,' 'Reformed,' and 'Protestant,' unless you teach everybody you have to do with 'why you are what you are.'" On October the 9th, two days before his death, he attended, in the Ulster Hall, Belfast, the last public meeting in which he took part, and he recurred to the same thought in very emphatic and impressive words. "I reciprocate," he said, "with my whole soul your most earnest desire that intercourse between our Churches should be constant and complete; that, as we look each other more in the face, we will know each other the better, and live equally in that true faith and fear of God which I saw characterised by a motto at Dublin—the faith taught by that Church, which is at once Apostolic, Catholic, Reformed, and Protestant. There was not one," he proceeded, "of those words that could be spared; and if ever it was necessary, if ever we began to doubt whether it was necessary, to lay so much emphasis upon that last word"—the word Protestant—"I think that events which have been occurring in the last few weeks, and the tone which has been adopted towards this primeval Church of Ireland and England, are things which warn us that that word is not to be forgotten." He was referring to the Pope's Encyclical respecting English orders. "No," he added, "it is not a word to be forgotten; but it is a word to be understood—a word which must not be used as a mere earthly, secular war-cry. Those are words which have a deep meaning for our children, which we should try to

penetrate, even better than now, and which we should hand down to them to be cherished for ever."[1]

The word "Protestant": its general meaning.

There are misconceptions now prevalent respecting the meaning of the word *Protestant*, which render peculiarly necessary such an endeavour as Archbishop Benson desired to penetrate its meaning better. A clergyman of great authority recently spoke of "the disastrous notion that we live in negations, as Protestants, but are unable, or afraid, to put forth positive truth as Catholics." It must be supposed by any one who uses such language that Protestantism consists in protesting against error, and particularly against the errors of the Church of Rome. This misapprehension of the meaning of the word has probably been greatly fostered by an unfortunate expression of Burke, in his letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe in 1792. In that letter he urges, in some most instructive observations, that the settlement at the time of the Revolution did not bind the nation barely to a Protestant religion, but to "the Protestant, Reformed religion, as it is established by law." The sovereign, says Burke, by that settlement, "may inherit the Crown as a Protestant, but he cannot hold it, according to law, without being a Protestant of the Church of England." In other words, 'Protestant' is an indispensable qualification of the religion which the sovereign of England is bound to profess, but it is only a qualification, and the substance of that religion is the Episcopal form of the Christian religion as established by

[1] 'Archbishop Benson in Ireland: a Record of his Irish Sermons and Addresses, 1896.' London, 1896. Pp. 26, 27, 110, 111.

prises to be able to enforce the observance of the Edict upon them. The consequence was that Luther's opinions spread, and his cause gained more adherents from year to year.

First Diet of Spires, 1526.

But when, in 1526, the Emperor summoned the first Diet of Spires, he hoped to bring this confusion to an end, and, as he said, "he desired to restore the empire again to a happy unity" — words characteristic of thoughts which have been prominent in the minds of rulers from Constantine downwards. But the princes who were on the side of the reformed doctrines did not scruple to bring their preachers to Spires; and though the churches were closed to them, they preached day by day in the inns in which the reformed princes lodged, and numbers of people came to hear them. Meanwhile the Pope quarrelled with the Emperor, and it thus became impracticable to carry through a strong papal policy in the Diet. It was therefore thought better to temporise, and it was resolved to send a special deputation to the Emperor, begging him to return to Germany, which he had left in 1521, and to take measures for the speedy summoning of a free General Council on German soil, or at least a Provincial Council, to decide the ecclesiastical questions at issue. But until such a Council was summoned, every authority in the Empire was to be at liberty "to live, to govern, and generally to act, as each might hope and trust to answer for himself before God and the Imperial Majesty." In other words, each State, each prince, or each free city was to be left at liberty to carry out the Worms Edict or not, on its own responsibility to God and the Emperor. Thus already, in the first Diet of Spires, the principle is recognised, though only temporarily,

that, in matters of faith and religion, governing authorities must be left to act on their own responsibility, and were not to be compelled by force to carry into effect, in those matters, a law which had been laid down by the supreme authority.

It was the same principle, in substance, which was destined to receive a more formal and permanent assertion in the second Diet of Spires, summoned in 1529. The situation had become much more alarming for the Reformed States. A good understanding had been established between the Emperor and the Pope; and, in a treaty made the same year between them, the Emperor and his brother Ferdinand, King of Bohemia and Hungary, pledged themselves "to use all possible endeavours to resist the pestilential disease of Lutheranism, and to bring back to the true Christian Church those who were in error." There was no sign, indeed, at the opening of the Diet, that the princes thus denounced were the least disposed to acknowledge themselves in error. They bore on the arms displayed at their several quarters the initial letters of the words which had become their watchword, "*Verbum Domini manet in Æternum*" —"The word of the Lord endureth for ever"; and again, in spite of a direct remonstrance from the Emperor's brother and representative, their preachers were heard, day by day, in their own residences, by crowds of people. The opening communication from the Emperor commenced with a reference to the danger with which the Empire was then threatened by the Turks, and implicitly reproached the Reforming States, by saying that the errors in the Christian faith had hitherto prevented a unanimous resistance to this

Second Diet of Spires, 1529.

common enemy. But the Emperor went on to declare, more particularly, his extreme displeasure with these errors, and his determination, as the supreme head of Christendom, to endure them no longer. He said that the long-promised Council might soon be expected, and that the Pope would gladly promote it. But meanwhile, under peril of the ban of the Empire, he forbade any further promotion of the Reformed doctrines and practices. He complained that the Edict of the previous Diet of Spires had been used against the interests of the Holy Faith; and, in the exercise of his supreme imperial authority, he declared that Edict to be null and void; and called on the authorities of the Empire, then assembled in the second Diet of Spires, to adopt an edict which would repress all religious innovations. The consequence was that, in spite of a strenuous resistance on the part of several influential princes, supported by some of the free cities, the Diet at length adopted a resolution with this object. It declared that the edict of the former Diet, according to which every one should act, in regard to the Edict of Worms, as he was prepared to do on his own responsibility, had been misunderstood, and had been misused in the excuse of all kinds of horrible doctrines and sects; and therefore it was resolved that those who had hitherto adhered to the Edict of Worms should continue to do so until the forthcoming Council, and should require their subjects also to adhere to it. In other States, in which the new doctrines had arisen, and in which they could not be abolished without great disturbance, inconvenience, and danger, there should, at all events, be no further innovations allowed until the Council met. More particularly,

doctrines and sects which were injurious to the blessed sacrament of the true body and blood of our Lord—a phrase which referred to the doctrines of Zwingli as distinct from those of Luther — should not be permitted by the authorities of the Holy Roman Empire, nor allowed to be preached; that the office of the Holy Mass should not be suppressed, and that in countries where the new doctrine had arisen, no one should be prevented from hearing Mass.

By this decision of a majority of the Diet, the progress of the Reformation would have been brought to a standstill. It was to be restrained by all the force of the Empire, even in the States in which it had found a footing; and while in all the Reformed States the Mass was to be allowed, in Roman Catholic States not only was the Reformed worship proscribed, but any propagation of Lutheran doctrine was to be prohibited. Consequently, the States which adopted the Reformed belief had to consider whether they would submit themselves to the will of the majority in the matter, as they were called upon to do by the Emperor and his representatives, and so acknowledge that they had been wrong in the past, and were not free to act on their own convictions in the future. They came to the conclusion that this was impossible, and they were consequently under the necessity of repudiating the right of the Diet to exercise any such coercive authority over them. They accordingly drew up, first of all, on April 19, 1529, a Protestation, and, further, on the 22nd, an *Instrumentum Appellationis*, presenting their protest with greater completeness. This is a very long document, but its substance

Protestation of April 19, 1529.

is sufficiently presented by Gieseler in the following passage.[1] He says:—

"Instrumentum Appellationis," April 22, 1529.

"In the great 'Instrumentum Appellationis' the previous representations of the Evangelical States, and their appeal, are embodied. They demand that the previous imperial Edict of 1526 should remain in force, since otherwise it would be difficult for peace to be preserved; they say they cannot assent to the observance of the Edict of Worms, nor to the maintenance of the Mass, as they would then be condemning their own doctrines. In all other points of their responsibility they declare themselves ready to render obedience to the Emperor. 'But these,' they say, 'are matters which touch and concern God's honour, and the salvation and eternal life of the souls of each one of us, and in which, by God's command, and for the sake of our consciences, we are pledged and bound to regard before all things the same our Lord and God, in the undoubting confidence that your Royal Serenity, our beloved fellow Princes and the others, will in a friendly spirit hold us excused that we are not one with you therein, and that we cannot in such a matter give way to the majority, as we have several times been urged to do in this Diet, especially having regard to the fact that the Edict of the previous Diet of Spires specially states, in the article in question, that it was adopted by a unanimous vote, and in all honour, equity, and right, such a unanimous decision can only be altered by a similarly unanimous vote. But besides this, in matters which concern God's honour and the salvation and eternal life of our souls, every one must stand

[1] Kirchengeschichte, vol. iii. 1, p. 231 note. Bonn, 1840.

and give account before God for himself; and no one can excuse himself by the action or decision of another, whether less or more. . . .' Against the rejection of the Zwinglian doctrine of the Holy Communion in the Imperial Edict, Luther and Melanchthon had nothing to object; but the Landgrave, with Melanchthon's assent, managed that a protest was also made against the issue of such a decision by the Diet, especially as those 'who are concerned in that question have not been summoned nor heard; and it is a matter for much consideration and deliberation that such grave and weighty articles should be handled without reference to the forthcoming Council, or that any decision or order should be taken upon them without requisite and fitting audience had of all those whom the matter affects.' The appeal is made 'to and before the Roman Imperial and Christian Majesty, our most gracious Lord; and further, to and before the forthcoming free Christian General Council, before our National Assemblies, and further, before every competent, impartial, and Christian judge of these matters.'" In short, the burden of this Protest is aptly summed up by the eminent Church historian Karl von Hase. "The Protest," he says,[1] "is an assertion that there are obligations against which no positive legal right has any force; or, as Minkwitz, the Saxon delegate at the Diet, expressed it, 'In matters of conscience, there can be no question of majorities'—'*In Sachen des Gewissens gibt es keine majorität.*' But the legal foundation of the Protest is not wanting, and is twofold: 1. That a decree unanimously passed by a previous Diet can only be reversed by an equally unani-

[1] Kirchengeschichte, 1891; Third Division, first part, p. 118.

mous consent. 2. That in matters which concern God's honour and the salvation of our souls, every one must stand for himself. This," adds Von Hase, "is precisely the point in which the essence of Protestantism consists."

It will thus be apparent what is the spirit and the essence of this momentous declaration, from which the title of *Protestant* is derived. Its authors were not then taking upon themselves to make any protest, either general or particular, against the doctrines of the Roman Church. The initiative, in the proceedings of the Diet, did not rest with them. Whatever protest there was in the sense of a negative was made *against them.* They were denounced as innovators against the order and peace of the Church and the concord of the Empire, and they were threatened with forcible control and repression. Upon this they came forward with a solemn positive protestation, before God and the Empire and the Estates of Germany, that they had acted in obedience to what they believed to be the teaching of the Word of God, which was the supreme authority, and in accordance with their conscience, and that they could not admit the right of a majority of the Diet to coerce or control them in such a matter. It is thus the first assertion by public authorities of the principle which Luther asserted for himself, as an individual, at the Diet of Worms in 1521, when he declared that the only authorities which he recognised as having a binding obligation upon his conscience were the Word of God and evident reason. "Unless," he said, "I am convinced by testimonies of the Scripture, or by evident reason — for I neither believe the Pope nor the Councils alone, since

it is clear that they have often erred and contradicted one another—I am overcome by the Scriptures I have quoted, and my conscience is taken captive by the words of God; I neither can nor will retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to act against conscience." This declaration, of the duty of abiding by the authority of conscience, under the supreme guidance and authority of the Word of God, and of not yielding in such matters to any human authority or majority, was carried by the *Protest of Spires* a step farther: it was extended from the individual to the community and the ruler; the right and the duty of the independent assertion of what is believed to be the truth in religious matters, by every State and every Church, was publicly claimed, and, by one great Protestation, was made the commencement of a new order of things, in Church and State.

Reasonable claims of the Princes and States.

It is, indeed, necessary to observe, if justice is to be done to the Princes and States at Spires, and to the true principle of the Protest, that no general or easy assertion is made of what is called "the right of private judgment." The princes do not claim any right to act at once for themselves, on their own sole and individual judgment, without regard to any other authority. On the contrary, it is important to notice that they only reserve their liberty of action until the matters in dispute can be considered by a General, or even a Provincial, Council. No doubt the principle involved in their Protest, as in that of Luther, precludes them from regarding themselves as absolutely bound even by the decrees of such a Council. They would still have to consider whether their consciences

would allow them, under the supreme authority of the Word of God, to submit to such decisions as might be made. But they formally acknowledge themselves bound to consult a Council, and it is only in the last resort that they assert the duty of independent decision and action. Now, it is one thing to say that every man has a right to judge for himself, and to go his own way in religious matters, and a very different thing to say that a man or a nation cannot be justly required to follow other people's judgment, and to go the way prescribed to them by others, in a grave matter of conscience, if, after appealing to the highest existing or possible authority, they are still unable to satisfy themselves that they can do what is asked without violating their duty to God. But the latter, and not the former, is the principle of which the Reforming princes at Spires made solemn protestation, and it is in this that the essence of Protestantism consists. The original Protest, in short, is a mean between two extremes—between the claim of the Roman Church for the absolute submission of all consciences to her authority, and the claim of the extreme parties on the other side for exemption in matters of conscience from deference to any authority, and for absolute individual freedom. The principle appears to be exactly expressed in the careful statement of Dr Hawkins of Oriel, in his Bampton Lectures.[1] "I am constrained," he says, "to disallow the claim of infallibility and absolute authority, whether advanced in behalf of any particular Church, or of the Church Universal; of the ancient Church in

Essence of Protestantism

[1] Bampton Lectures, 1840, p. 200.

the period of her comparative unity, as well as of the modern Church in her state of sad disunion; yielding, indeed, to use the words of Dr Jackson, 'a conditional assent and a cautionary obedience,' wherever it is justly due; but never in any case conceding, except to the original messengers of revealed truth, 'absolute assent and unqualified obedience.'" To the same effect, Dr Hawkins adds that "the English Church, while she accepts the decrees of the four first Councils in matters of faith, nevertheless confesses that 'General Councils may err': 'Wherefore,' she adds, 'their decrees have no authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture'; and while she acknowledges that 'the three Creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed,' yet does she not presume to mention as the ground for her belief any consent of Fathers, judgment of antiquity, or authority of the Universal Church, but this only basis of her pure and Scriptural faith: 'For they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.'"

Fundamental principle of Individual and National Churches.

The Protest of Spires, in a word, has justly given its designation to the whole reforming movement, because it laid down the principle without which no action of individual Churches in favour of Reform would have been possible. It was the indispensable foundation of the system of National Churches; and the action of Henry VIII. was as much based on the principle of the Protest of Spires as was the action of the Duke of Saxony. It appears a serious mistake to say, as is sometimes done, that, in throwing off the Papal supremacy, Henry VIII. was only carrying farther a principle which the Kings of England had always

asserted, as against the Popes. They had asserted, in greater or less degree, the independence of what we may call their administrative and governing authority. But they had never assumed, as Henry VIII. did, that the National Church under their own supremacy had power to deal with matters of doctrine on its own responsibility, independently of the authority of the Roman Church and of the Pope. In this respect Henry VIII. was far more Protestant than his daughter Elizabeth. He went much beyond the decree of Spires; and in Elizabeth's time English statesmen and prelates fell back upon its moderate and guarded position; asserting, indeed, in the Articles that, in the last resort, not even the authority of a General Council can bind the conscience, but yielding, as Dr Hawkins says, "a cautionary obedience," as far as possible, to such authorities, and exhibiting an earnest desire to consult them whenever they may be accessible. Protestantism, therefore, as adopted at Spires, and as embodied in English teaching and practice, does not consist primarily in protesting against particular doctrines or practices of Roman theology or order, nor in the assertion of any unqualified right of private judgment. It is simply a solemn assertion of that fundamental right, by which this Church and nation undertook, on their own responsibility before God and man, to reform themselves, and by which they claim to act for themselves in matters of faith and religion, independently of any such authority as is claimed by the see of Rome, or even of any supreme authority in the Church at large.

II.

Reasonable authority: reasonable obedience.

The Protestation at Spires answered its purpose. It gave the protesting States a firm principle on which to stand, in resisting any attempt to suppress by force the reform they had introduced. It was destined, indeed, of necessity, to work itself out to an extent on which they had not calculated. For the purpose of the Princes and the Councils of Free Cities who made the Protest, the unit of resistance to the supreme authority was the ruling power in each State or city, and they did not scruple to assert their own authority over the individuals who were under their government. But, as Luther's own example had shown, their subjects had the same rights of conscience against them as they had against the Emperor and the Diet, and they found in due time that, in their resistance to the Emperor, they had surrendered some of their own power within their own dominions. The practical effect, in the long-run, was to render government in religious matters a question of compromise between the various forces, individual and governmental, which were concerned in the matter. Henceforth, where the principles of the Protest of Spires were admitted, no Government, no authority, could claim the right of absolute obedience. But some obedience was essential for the conduct of human affairs, and the problem of religious government thus became, in each case, the practical one of ascertaining the limits of reasonable obedience on the one side, and of reasonable authority on the other. The Protest set the various

religious forces of life as free as is possible under the practical conditions of human affairs; and, from that great moment, the recognition of relative rights between the governors and the governed, and their mutual adjustment, has been the law of religious organisation. Even the Papacy and the Empire hesitated thenceforth to assert, or at least to practise, an unconditional sovereignty. The principle of absolute obedience had to take refuge in a new Society, that of the Jesuits, which at length succeeded in impressing its spirit on the Roman Church. On the Protestant side, the Calvinistic organisation, which soon after sprang up, exhibited a somewhat similar reaction in favour of the principle of obedience to authority. The Calvinistic conception of God, as an absolute ruler, reflected itself, as the conceptions of God's character always do, upon the tone of thought, and the habits, of those who were imbued with it; and the Calvinistic Church promoted the ideal of a theocratic rule, in which men were again subject to the unbending authority of the Church. But, nevertheless, the moderating principle of the Spires Protest held its own, and made its way; and *a just balance between freedom and authority* became, in an increasing degree, especially in England, the ideal of religious government.

Diet of Augsburg, 1530.

The first evidence of this result was afforded by the Diet of Augsburg, which immediately followed, in 1530, the Diet of Spires of the previous year. In the interval, the Emperor had made peace with the Pope, and had been crowned by him in Italy; but he nevertheless found himself obliged to meet the Diet in a spirit of far greater moderation than he had shown at Spires. His opening com-

munication desired that the Diet should take measures for appeasing the religious dissensions, but so that every one's disposition, opinion, and view should be heard in all love and gentleness, in order to bring men to one united Christian truth, to conciliate them, and to put aside everything which had been unjustly charged against either side. That they should be met in this spirit, only a year after the second Edict of Spires, was a remarkable triumph for the Protestant States; and it is to their honour that they responded with a similar moderation. The Emperor made public demonstration of his own adherence to the old faith and practice by taking part, in a conspicuous manner, on the day after he arrived at Augsburg, in the procession of Corpus Christi; and the Protestant princes similarly exhibited their adherence to their own principles by abstaining from the ceremony. But, on the other hand, they abstained from having sermons preached under their protection by their own preachers, and submitted to the Emperor's direction that none but persons appointed by himself should be allowed to preach.

But above all, it was in this spirit of moderation that they proceeded to comply with the Emperor's desire that a statement should be presented, to him and the Diet, of their beliefs and claims in the religious questions at issue. A statement for this purpose had been the subject of much careful consideration by the Lutheran theologians; and, in consultation with them, it was ultimately drawn up by Melanchthon, and adopted by the great majority of them, though four free cities, which could not subscribe to the Lutheran assertion of the real presence in the Holy Com-

Augsburg Confession.

munion, presented a separate confession, known as the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*. But the Confession was signed by the representatives of the other reforming States, and became known as the Augsburg Confession, or the Confessio Augustana, and has ever since been the chief symbolic document of the Lutheran Church. As the Protest of Spires embodies the fundamental principle of public and private action by which religious liberty was rendered possible, alike for nations and for individuals, so the Augsburg Confession embodies, in the simplest and clearest form, the cardinal theological ideas of the reforming movement. Various Churches and individuals, as the movement proceeded, adopted variations of opinion from it on special points. But these variations, whether distinctively Lutheran, Calvinistic, or English, did not affect the central principles from which the whole movement started; and those principles are stated in this Confession with all the responsibility and gravity which became such an occasion. For the first time, in the face of Europe, the Protestants were to declare the truth that was in them; and they appreciated the obligation of stating that faith in the manner which would best commend it to the consciences alike of their adversaries and of their friends. It is here that Protestant principles should be studied, if they are to be fairly and fully appreciated. The germinal thoughts and experiences, out of which the movement sprang, are, of course, more vividly exhibited in the life of Luther, and particularly in his early life, and his experiences as a monk. But his strong personal character gives them a colour which is apt to lead to their misappre-

Germ of Protestant principles.

hension by some minds; whereas, in the Confession of Augsburg, these personal peculiarities are eliminated, and the great principles stand out in their permanent meaning and order. At the same time, the Confession is not merely a formal theological statement like our Articles. It is instinct with the deep earnestness and anxiety of that critical moment, when it was felt that the great spiritual forces, which were dividing the world, had come face to face with each other for the final issue.

It is, in the first place, to be observed that the Reforming states express their readiness, and even anxious desire, to discuss amicably with their opponents the differences between them; and in the event of an agreement not being effected in the Diet, they offer to lay their cause before the Council, which had been promised by the Emperor and the Pope. To that General Council as well as to the Emperor, they had already, in due form of law, made their protestation and appeal; and to that appeal, they say, in the concluding words of their preface to the Emperor, they still adhere, and have neither the intention nor the power of abandoning it, as they now once more solemnly and publicly protest—*de quo hic etiam solenniter et publice protestamur.* At the conclusion of the Confession, they declare that, in doctrine and ceremonies, nothing is received among them contrary to the Scriptures or the Catholic Church, and that it is evident they have most diligently taken care that no new or impious dogmas should creep into their Churches. In another connection they make a still more remarkable statement. The Confession is divided into two parts, the first of which gives a summary of the doctrines taught

among them, and the second mentions certain abuses which prevailed in practice in the Church of their day, and which they had removed; and with respect to the former part—the doctrines they teach—they declare, not only that their doctrine does not differ from that of the Catholic Church, but that it does not differ from that of the Roman Church. "This," they say in Article xxii., "is a general summary of the doctrine which prevails among us, in which it will be seen that there is nothing which differs from the Scriptures, or from the Catholic Church, or from the Roman Church, as far as is known from writers. This being so, it is a harsh judgment to claim that we should be considered heretics. The dissension relates to some abuses which have crept into the Church without definite authority, in which, even if there were some divergence, nevertheless it might be hoped that the bishops, in view of the Confession of Faith we have now made, would extend some toleration to us; for even the Canons are not so harsh as to require the same rites everywhere, nor, in fact, have the rites of all Churches ever been quite similar. At the same time, among us the ancient rites are in great measure diligently preserved. It is a false calumny that all ceremonies and all old institutions are abolished in our Churches. On the other hand, it has been a matter of public complaint that certain abuses prevailed in the common rites; and as these could not be approved with a good conscience, they have been in some measure corrected."

Catholicity of the Protestants.

It is apparent from these solemn statements that the first Protestants—those from whom the name is derived—were most earnest and careful in claiming a Catholic position.

They reiterate again and again that their Churches do not dissent from the Catholic Church in any single article of faith. They not only begin, in the first article of the Confession, by declaring their adherence to the Nicene symbol; they claim for all the other doctrines they assert that they are part of the ancient Catholic faith. It is still more remarkable to find them claiming, in the words just quoted, that there is nothing in their teaching which differs from that of the Roman Church, "so far as it is known from its writers." But there is no reason to doubt either that they were perfectly sincere in making this claim, or that it is capable of substantial defence, with the qualification they annex to it, of judging that doctrine by authoritative writings. Our own divine, Dean Field, in his great work on the Church, maintains a similar position respecting Protestant doctrine in his day, asserting that the best divines of the Roman Church, before the Reformation, were in agreement with the Reformed doctrines, and were, as he says, Protestants before us, and that the doctrine to which the Roman Church pledged itself at the Council of Trent represented the triumph of an arrogant modern faction. But even if this claim be a mistaken one, if it overlooks, at all events, the steady drift of opinion in the later Middle Ages, the fact that it should have been so clearly asserted serves to emphasise the earnest desire of the Protestants to maintain their unity with the great lines of Catholic tradition. Accordingly Canon Dixon points out, in his History of the Church of England, that the use of the word "Protestant" in England, up to and including the time of the Caroline divines, was understood to include the designa-

tion of Catholic, and that Laud and his friends called themselves Protestants, as against the Puritans, to indicate that they were Catholics.[1] Protestantism, in the great charter of its foundation, thus bound itself up with true Catholicism, and any teaching which is not Catholic is, by that fact, condemned as not truly Protestant.

Nature of the struggle.

But this being so, what, it must be asked, was the nature of the difference by which, as a matter of fact, Europe had become divided into two camps, ranged opposite each other, in imminent danger of nothing less than civil war? The divergence must have been deep and momentous which, in the space of little more than ten years, had produced so profound a division in Christendom. The answer is that, in the view of the Reformers, certain cardinal truths of the Catholic faith had been for a long time ignored, or at least allowed to remain in a very secondary position, and that the revival of these truths, or the reassertion of their true position and importance, had necessarily the effect of altering the balance of doctrine and practice, and of bringing into prominence aspects of Christian belief, and Christian practice, which, to the great disadvantage of Christian life, had fallen into desuetude. In order to apprehend the

[1] He says, vol. iv. p. 221, "The word Protestant retained its original and proper meaning in England (or a share of it) when, in the next century, it was used to denote the High Church or Laudian party in opposition to the Puritans; but unhappily it passed into vogue at last as the opposite not of Papist but of Catholic: in which abused sense it is now common to literature. This popular and literary misconception has reacted on the history of the Reformation with stupefying effect. The men who let themselves be called Protestants, but were never weary of declaring themselves Catholics, have been thought to have been not Catholic because Protestant. The opposite of Catholic is not Protestant but heretic; the opposite of Protestant is not Catholic but Papist."

nature of this alteration of view, or point of view, it is essential to begin where the Augsburg Confession begins. That commencement requires very careful consideration. The Confession does not begin with the doctrine of Justification by Faith, nor with the assertion of any special views respecting the Sacraments or the Church. But immediately after the first article, *De Deo*, declaring the adherence of the Reformers to the Nicene Creed, it lays down their teaching respecting Original Sin. That is the real point, from which the whole movement of thought and spiritual experience starts. It is very characteristic of the situation of the moment that, not only does the Confession not commence as our Articles do—after the introductory ones which correspond to the Augsburg Article *De Deo*—with declaring that the Scripture is the sole Rule of Faith, but the Confession contains no article at all on that subject. The Reformers practically assume that the Rule of Faith to which they appeal is the same as that of their adversaries, and they do not think it necessary to put prominently forward the sole supremacy of the Scriptures. The circumstance that the controversial part of our Articles, in distinction from the Augsburg Confession, commences with the assertion of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, seems due to the fact that, before the Articles were composed, the Roman Church, in the Council of Trent, had laid down, as the foundation of her whole position, the co-ordinate authority of tradition with the Scriptures. The Roman controversialists had discovered, after the first twenty years of their discussion with the Protestants, that they could not hold their ground on the basis of the Scriptures alone; and

Second article of the Confession, respecting Original Sin.

accordingly, the first thing they did, in the Council of Trent, was to assert the traditions of the Church as a part of the Rule of Faith. This "formal" principle became of more and more importance as the controversy proceeded; but, at the stage we are now considering, it is not the formal, but the material, or substantial, principle which is in the forefront of the controversy, and this principle, as has been said, arises, according to the Augsburg Confession, out of the truth of Original Sin. The Reformers teach, in the second article of the Confession, that "after the fall of Adam, all men, who are naturally engendered, are born with sin; that is, without fear of God, without trust towards God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease or original corruption—*vitium originis*—is truly sin, involving damnation, and bringing even now eternal death upon those who are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit. They anathematise the Pelagians and others, who deny that this original fault or corruption is sin, and who diminish the glory of the merits and benefits of Christ by maintaining that men can be justified before God by the natural powers of reason." It will be noticed how closely in this, as in other things, our Articles follow the general lines of this Confession, alike in the substance of their statement respecting original sin, and in the order in which they place the article on the subject—immediately, that is, after the articles which define the Rule of Faith, and thus at the head of the articles which deal with the doctrinal matters of controversy.

But what is the reason why this doctrine assumes such prominence? It is because the whole movement started

out of a deeper apprehension of the corruption and evil of human nature than had, perhaps, prevailed in the Church since the time of St Augustine. The main tendency of Middle Age theology was Pelagian. Bradwardine, the *Doctor Profundus*, for a brief time Archbishop of Canterbury in 1349, declared that the whole world of his day had gone after Pelagius; and at the time of the Reformation, though orthodoxy might be saved by subtle distinctions, the practical effect of the prevalent teaching was to throw men upon their own efforts—upon their own obedience, at all events, to the rules of religion and of the Church—for their salvation, and for their attainment of perfection. The mere fact, the unquestionable fact, that forgiveness could, under express Papal authority, be bought for a price, is sufficient to prove that there was, at all events, prevalent a grave obscuration of the deadly nature of sin and of human evil. The Reformers, however, did not approach this subject as a technical theological doctrine. They came to it as to a matter of deep personal experience. They felt in themselves, and they awakened in others, an intense feeling that man was very far gone—*quam longissime*—from original righteousness, from the nature and the perfection for which he was intended, and consequently that he must needs abandon all idea of hope or help from his own powers. For this purpose, it will be observed, they bring into special prominence man's failure to live in the due love and fear of God. They say that men are born "with sin, that is, without fear of God, without trust towards God, and with concupiscence—*cum peccato, hoc est sine metu Dei, sine fiducia erga Deum et cum concupiscentia.*" The lust of

concupiscence is not the starting-point of the evil, but its consequence. In proportion as men do not live in the love and fear of God, the passions of their lower nature are inevitably let loose, and fall into disorder. The characteristic teaching of the later schoolmen on this point was that the fall did but remove an addition which had been made by God to the natural endowments of man. But the Reformers regarded the fall as having removed the mainspring, deprived human nature of its sun and centre, and thus involved it in utter ruin and confusion. For the mere functions of civil life, it retains to a great extent the power of free-will and self-government; though even in this sphere it can only be kept in tolerable order by the stern administration of law, and its evil impulses are perpetually at work. But for the higher purposes of the soul, for its ideal life, a fall from God was a fall from everything. When they looked into their own hearts, or when they looked around them, and saw the widespread absence of the habit of living in God, with God, and for God, it appeared to them like a permanent solar eclipse in the spiritual world, and they could not use language strong enough to express their sense of the fearful disaster which it involved.

The failure of their adversaries to appreciate their point of view in this respect is strangely exhibited in the official Confutation of the Confession, which was drawn up at the time by order of the Emperor. This Confutation, prepared by Roman Catholic divines at the Council, says that they approve the second article of the Confession, so far as it states that original corruption is really sin, bringing damnation and

eternal death to those who are not born anew by baptism and the Holy Spirit. But the statement, that it is a part of original sin that men are born without fear of God, and without trust in God, is altogether to be rejected, since it is evident to every Christian that to be without fear of God and trust in God is rather the actual sin of the adult than the fault of the new-born infant. As though the Reformers had been concerned to settle the exact relations between original and actual sin! As is said in the 'Apology of the Confession,' written by Melanchthon in reply to the 'Confutatio Pontificia,' their simple object was to recite the whole contents and consequences which are involved in original sin. They were concerned to urge that men not only failed in acts of fear and love towards God, but in the very capacity for it; so that nature, by itself, was possessed by concupiscence, and could not manifest true fear and love towards God.

Failure of the Church in the Middle Ages.

This was the starting-point—an utter sense of helplessness, a conviction that men and women were so far gone from original righteousness that they had not even power "to turn themselves," by any natural strength or good works of their own, "to faith and calling upon God." After all, it is to be remembered that this conviction was the result produced upon earnest minds, like Luther's, by the practice and experience of the Church of the Middle Ages. The history of that Church is the history of prolonged and heroic efforts to attain perfection. The most unsparing asceticism, the most unbounded self-sacrifice, an inexhaustible energy and fertility in good works of all kinds, new orders of monkery, rules of ever-increasing severity, cere-

monies heaped upon ceremonies, had been produced by this insatiable craving after perfection; and what was the result? As to the general state of the Church, and the Christian life, let Erasmus's 'Encomium Moriæ,' his satirical eulogy of folly, written in 1510, before the commencement of the Lutheran movement, be a sufficient witness. The corruption which that satire lays bare throughout the Church, in the Clergy, the monastic Orders, and the Court of Rome, would be incredible, if it were not thus attested by a contemporary observer like Erasmus, who, when the crisis came, stood aside from the Reforming movement. It is no disparagement of the persistent efforts of the doctors and saints of the Middle Ages to say that, at the time the Reformation commenced, their system was bankrupt. It had failed, not only to produce the perfection at which it had aimed, but even to preserve the Church and the world from the most intolerable corruptions. But if it had failed publicly, it had not less conspicuously failed in individual experience. Its high ideal standard, its intense asceticism, the terrors with which, not only in hell but in purgatory, it had invested the idea of God and His righteousness, had taken comfort and hope out of the hearts of numbers of earnest souls. Few things, accordingly, are more striking in the early sermons of the preachers of the Reformation, or in the Apology itself, than the stress which is constantly laid upon the troubled and affrighted consciences to which they address themselves. The 20th Article of the Confession, for instance, on good works, speaks of the consolation brought by the Reformed doctrine to pious and trembling consciences, which could not be rendered tranquil by any

works, and it says that the whole of the Reformed teaching is to be referred to the struggle of a terrified conscience, and cannot be understood without that struggle. Formerly, it goes on to say, consciences were tormented by the doctrine of works, and did not hear the consolation of the Gospel. Some were driven by their conscience into the desert, or into monasteries, hoping to merit grace there by a monastic life.

These statements, made in the face of the world, before the Diet, and not denied by the Papal Confutation, indicate what was the prevalent need and craving to which the Reformers addressed themselves. In answer to this article of the Confession, the Papal Confutation simply asserts that good works do merit the remission of sins. The contrary doctrine, they say, as it has been formally rejected and condemned, so it is now rejected and condemned. But unfortunately, whether good works merited remission of sins or not, the bitter experience of the Reformers, and of the struggling men and women whom they addressed, was sufficient to show that they did not bring to men any assurance of the remission of sins, and that they left consciences struggling with the fear of God's wrath, and of the judgments which they had to encounter. It was this general sense of helplessness which rendered possible such practices as that of indulgences. It was, to a great extent, in a sort of despair that men and women clutched at the extravagant promises held out to them, of escaping the punishments to which they were liable by buying the Pope's pardons, and helping to build St Peter's. But when one great and genuine soul had wrestled with these terrors

of conscience for years in a monastery, when the truth had been brought home to the depths of his conscience, by a bitter personal experience, that there was no hope in himself and his own efforts, but that he must look altogether outside himself for forgiveness and for peace, and when he brought this experience home to the hearts of others, the long struggle of the Middle Ages had reached its natural conclusion. Every door towards peace and forgiveness had been tried which human thought could conceive, and which human self-sacrifice could test, and every such effort had failed; and when that failure was at length realised, men's hearts leapt up at the renewed declaration of those "comfortable words which our Saviour Christ saith to all that truly turn to Him."

If, in short, in one sense the Reformation was a revolt against the teaching of the Middle Ages, or at least its later teaching, in another sense it is the natural result and product of that teaching. The saints and doctors of the Middle Ages, by the very heroism of their efforts, by the strain to which they had put the powers of human nature, had proved the inadequacy of those powers, and the necessity of resorting to some other source of forgiveness, peace, and new life. The Reformers, in vindicating their doctrine and their messages, might well have adapted to themselves, in relation to the prevalent teaching of the Church, the words of St Paul: "Do we then make void the teaching and the experience of the past by our doctrine? God forbid. Yea, we recognise and establish the result of that experience and that teaching." Luther could not have been the Reformer he was if he had not been a monk; and in the same way,

no one can appreciate the great message of the Reformation who does not begin, in personal experience, with an apprehension of the intensity of the original sin and helplessness of his nature. It remains to illustrate the answer given by the Reformers to this terrible sense of human weakness and misery.

III.

Third article of the Confession. Actual Sins as well as Original Sin included under the one Sacrifice.

We have seen that the Confession of Augsburg starts from the sad fact, which a bitter experience had forced upon the Reformers, and which was too fully established by the experience of the Church at large, of the impotence of human nature in spiritual things, and of its consequent inability to obtain forgiveness, peace, or holiness by its own efforts or sacrifices. What, we are next to ask, was the remedy the Reformers proposed for this bankruptcy of human powers? The foundation for the answer is laid in the third article, following the second on original sin. "We teach also," it says, in words of which our own second article are an echo, "that the Word, that is, the Son of God, took human nature upon him in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary; so that two natures, the Divine and human, were joined together in unity of person, never to be divided, one Christ, very God and very man, born of the Virgin Mary, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men. The same Christ descended into hell, and truly rose again the third day, then ascended to the heavens, to sit at the right hand of the Father, and for ever to reign and be

Lord over all creatures, to sanctify those who believe on Him, by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who should govern, control, and quicken them, and defend them against the Devil and the power of sin. The same Christ will manifestly come again, to judge the quick and the dead, according to the Apostles' Creed."

The past and present work of Christ—His sacrifice in the past, and His sanctification of the faithful by His Spirit in the present—is thus put forward as the sole source of our forgiveness and redemption; and to this statement the Papal Confutation has no objection to make. It is, however, remarkable, and is perhaps an indication of the imperfect perception by its authors of the questions at issue, that they do not notice the important clause, repeated in our own article, that our Lord was a sacrifice, "*not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men.*" When the question recurs again, in the article respecting the Mass, the Confession expressly alleges that "an opinion prevailed —which had led to an infinite increase of private Masses —that Christ, by His Passion, had made satisfaction for original sin, but had instituted the Mass as an oblation to be made for daily sins, mortal and venial; and that from thence flowed the current opinion that the Mass is a work putting away the sins of the living and the dead, *ex opere operato.*" The Papal Confutation, in dealing with that part of the Confession, disputes this statement, but practically admits it. "We do not teach," they say, "that the Mass puts away—*delet*—sins, which are taken away by penance, as their proper medicine; but it does put away the punishment due for sin—*delet pœnam pro peccato debitam*—and sup-

plements satisfaction for sins." It is at all events evident that the words "not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men," are inserted by the Reformers in their Confession with a deliberate and important purpose, in order to state, in the most comprehensive manner, that, in the words of our Prayer of Consecration, our Lord, "by His one oblation of Himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." Nothing more can be required by the divine justice in satisfaction for sin, in addition to that one perfect and sufficient sacrifice of Christ. The grace won by that sacrifice has, indeed, to be applied and used, and Christian life and Christian worship consist in its use and application; but as a satisfaction for sin, for the sins of the whole world, it is complete and final, and nothing whatever in the way of satisfaction can be added to it.

Fourth article of the Confession. Justification for Christ's sake through Faith.

Then it is, having laid this great foundation, that the Reformers advance, in their fourth article, to the doctrine in which this great truth is applied to the relief of that state of helplessness, and desperation of self, in which they felt themselves and their fellows immersed. "We further teach," they say, "that men cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits, or works, but are freely — *gratis*—justified for Christ's sake, by faith, when they believe that they are received into grace, and that their sins are remitted for Christ's sake, who, by His death, made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness before Him, as is stated in the 3rd and 4th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans." Here at length we

come — not so much to the cardinal principle of the Reformed teaching, for that is rather contained in the previous article, of the absolute sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ as a satisfaction for sin — but to its practical application, and consequently to the practical point which was at issue. Consider before you, as I have said, all the troubled consciences of those times, the earnest souls who, by asceticism and self-denial, had tried to conquer sin within them, and to win peace, and had failed, and the mass of people in ordinary life, who looked forward with dread to the divine judgments, and were clutching even at straws like indulgences to escape them—how was the blessing of forgiveness or justification to be obtained by them? The Reformers said, It is there, and you can take it when you will. You have no need to consider whether you are fit for it; you have not to consider whether you have done and suffered enough for it; you never could do or suffer enough for it; if any part of it, however small, depended upon your doing or suffering, you could have no assurance of it. But it is given you—given you by virtue of the one complete sacrifice of Christ, and you have but to accept it. The promise is made to you, and you have but to believe it. Only believe the promise; and, in the faith of the promise, take up the gift that is offered you, and it is yours. It is a gift, and you are only asked to accept it; but, that you may accept it, you must, of course, believe the promise; and it is by faith, therefore, by faith in God's promise and God's offer, and by that alone, that you can obtain peace for your souls, and enter into full enjoyment of God's favour and God's love. Of course, as

they go on to say in the sixth article, this is but the beginning of the Christian life. We are received into God's favour, and given His grace, not only because of the infinite blessing which that favour and forgiveness are in themselves, but in order that we may enter on a life of new obedience. That sixth article, which is entitled "Of the new obedience"—*De nova obedientia*—says that "we teach that this faith ought to produce good fruits, and that we are bound to do good works commanded by God, for the sake of God's will, though not that we may have any confidence of deserving by those works justification before God."

Sixth article of the Confession. Good works a result.

The Papal Confutation, on this point, exhibits a complete misapprehension of the question at issue, and a reference to it will help to make the point more clear. "It is," they say, "a Catholic truth, and in accordance with ancient Councils, that men cannot merit eternal life by their own powers, apart from the grace of God. . . . But if it be intended to invalidate the merits of men for works which are done with the assistance of divine grace, the statement is more suited to Manichæans than to the Catholic Church." "It is," they add, "altogether contrary to the Scriptures to deny that our works are meritorious," and they quote such passages of Scripture as St Paul's statement that he had fought a good fight, and that henceforth there was "laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which God, the righteous judge, would give him in that day." But the Reformers had no idea of questioning God's gracious promises of reward for good works done by men who enjoyed the assistance of His grace. The question was, What brought them

Misconceptions regarding the attitude of the Reformers.

into that state of grace? It is by virtue of their forgiveness and adoption as children—in other words, their justification—that they receive His gracious assistance. That forgiveness, that justification, constitutes the great revolution in their condition; and it was this which, the Reformers declared, was offered to all men, without any merits or work of their own, which was bestowed upon them freely, and could be accepted only as a gift.

It is because this can only be accepted, not earned, that faith acquires its importance in the matter. If you are told that a gift is at your disposal, your enjoyment of it depends, not on anything that you do, but on your belief of the assurance, your trusting it, and acting upon it. The strangest misconceptions have prevailed on this point. It has been said that the Reformers attributed some abstract virtue to Faith,—that Faith, as an abstract quality, was elevated by them to a novel supremacy, and that their doctrine was simply, "Believe that you have and you have it." But there is nothing abstract, nothing independent, in the faith of which the Reformers spoke. It exists solely by virtue of the antecedent promise and assurance of God; and, as is urged again and again by the Confession of Augsburg and the Apology for the Confession, it is simply the response to that promise on the part of man. A promise or assurance can only be met by one of two things—belief or disbelief. God gives us the assurance of His favour and forgiveness, for Christ's sake; do you believe Him or disbelieve Him? There is no third alternative. Of course, if we believe the assurance and take the gift, and then misuse it, we are liable to forfeit

it. The object for which a man is introduced into God's favour, and given God's grace, is that he may live by that grace, and may do God's will; and if he does not strive to do so, his nominal acceptance of the gift is a mockery. But the gift is offered to him absolutely, for Christ's sake; it is for him to take it or leave it. When he believes it he has it, because it is there; if he disbelieves it, he does not have it, though it still remains at his disposal; and consequently there is no possible way of stating the bare fact of the case, but that a man is freely justified, through Christ, when by faith he believes the offer made him, and closes with it.

It should, therefore, be particularly noticed that the phrase, *Justification by faith*, is really an abbreviated expression of the truth, and is not the phrase originally used by the Reformers in the Confession of Augsburg. They say, not that men are justified by faith, but that they are *justified for Christ's sake through faith.* Our own article is in strict conformity with this expression, and brings out its meaning still more clearly, when it says that "we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings." That we are justified by faith is a mere consequence of the truth: the cardinal point is that we are justified only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That being so, our part is reduced to the acceptance of the gift, by virtue of a belief in the promise which offers us the gift, and for this reason we are said to be justified by faith only.

This aspect of the truth may be confirmed and illustrated

Twentieth article of the Confession. A famous passage.

by another quotation from the Confession, in the twentieth article, which is one of its most famous passages. "As the doctrine of faith," it says, "which ought to be the chief doctrine in the Church, has so long lain unknown—for all must confess that there used in sermons to be the profoundest silence respecting the righteousness of faith, and that the doctrine of works was the only one heard in Churches — our teachers have thus admonished their Churches respecting faith: First, that our works cannot reconcile God, or merit the remission of sins, or grace, or justification, but that this we receive only by faith, believing that we are received into grace for Christ's sake, who alone is set forth as our Mediator and our propitiation, and by whom the Father is reconciled. . . . This doctrine of faith is everywhere treated in St Paul, as he says: *By grace ye are saved*, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. . . . Men are also admonished that this word *faith* does not signify merely a knowledge of history, such as exists in the godless and in the devil, but signifies a faith which believes not only the history, but the effect of the history — namely, this article of remission of sins, that is, that, through Christ, we have grace, righteousness, and the remission of sins. Now, he who knows that through Christ he has the Father propitious to him, he it is who truly knows God, is assured that he is a subject of God's care, and calls upon Him in prayer. In short, he is no longer without God, like the heathen. For devils and the godless cannot believe this article of remission of sins. Therefore they hate God as an enemy, they do not call upon Him, they do not expect any good

from Him. Augustine, in speaking of the word *faith*, similarly admonishes the reader, and teaches that, in the Scriptures, the word *faith* is accepted, not for mere knowledge, such as exists in the godless, but for trust—*fiducia*—which consoles and lifts up terrified and troubled hearts.

"But, further, we teach that it is necessary to do good works, not in order to trust to merit grace by them, but for the sake of the will of God. By faith alone we apprehend the remission of sins and grace. But because by faith the Holy Spirit is received, our hearts also are renovated, and put on new affections, so as to be able to produce good works. . . . For human powers, without the Holy Spirit, are full of godless affections, and are too feeble to be able to do good works before God. Moreover, they are under the dominion of the devil, who impels men to various sins, to godless opinions, to open crimes: as may be seen in philosophers who have themselves tried to live honourable lives, yet have not been able to do it, but have been contaminated with many manifest sins. Such is the feebleness of man when he is without faith, and without the Holy Spirit, and governs himself by human strength alone.

"Hence it is readily apparent that our doctrine is not to be accused of prohibiting good works, but much rather to be praised for showing how we may be able to do good works. For without faith human nature is in no wise able to do the works of the first or second commandment. Without faith it does not call upon God, does not expect anything from God, does not endure the cross, but seeks for human aids, and trusts in human assistance. Thus

there reign in the heart all lusts and human devices, when faith and trust towards God are absent. Wherefore also Christ said, *Without me ye can do nothing;* and the Church sings, *Sine tuo numine nihil est in homine, nihil est innoxium.*"

This classical passage, as it has been called, brings out with great clearness the momentous practical effect of the revival of this old Catholic doctrine. It lifted all believers at once into a state of confidence towards God, of peace and joy, and set them free, with unburdened hearts, to serve God, and to do good to their neighbours. Men had been living under a cloud, with doubtful hearts, burdened with fear of mysterious future judgments and penalties, perplexing and tormenting their consciences to make satisfaction for their sins, and when they died, leaving money to buy masses to be said for their release from the pains of purgatory. But, by this great proclamation, the cloud was suddenly lifted, the face of God was revealed as gracious and propitious to them in Christ, and they were only asked, for His love, and for their Saviour's sake, to try to do His will, and to live in faith and trust towards Him, and in love towards their neighbour. It was a complete transformation of life, like that which was produced in the prodigal son, when, after struggling back in fear and shame to his Father's house, his Father saw him a great way off, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and took him, though he had done nothing to deserve it, back into his love and favour.

Spirit of the Reformation.

Accordingly, wherever this doctrine was really grasped, we witness the development of a characteristic type of

free, confident, generous, energetic, and childlike Christianity. The word which is perhaps most characteristic of the spirit fostered by the Reformers' teaching, especially in Germany, is the word *child*—the tender German word *kind*—with all the relations of childlike trust and confidence, and fatherly love and protection, which it evokes. We feel this spirit, for instance, in the exquisite morning and evening prayers which Luther taught the German nation in his Shorter Catechism: "I thank thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast preserved me this night from all harm and danger, and I pray Thee Thou wouldst also protect me this day from sin and all evil, that all my deeds and my life may be pleasing in Thy sight. For I commend myself, my body and soul, and all, into Thy hands. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the evil one may have no power over me;" and "then," he adds, "go joyfully to thy work, and sing some hymn, or the Ten Commandments, or whatever thy devotion may suggest." So at night, for an evening blessing, he bids you, when you go to bed, "sign thyself with the holy cross, and say: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer; and, if thou wilt, thou mayest add this short prayer: I thank Thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously protected me through this day; and I beseech Thee Thou wouldst forgive me all my sins, wherever I have done wrong, and graciously protect me this night. For I commend myself, my body and soul, and all, into Thy hands; let Thy holy angel be with me,

Luther's Prayers.

that the evil one may have no power over me; and then," he adds characteristically, "quickly and cheerfully to sleep." But the same childlike spirit breathes throughout the whole devotional literature, especially in Germany, which has been produced under this influence. I take, for instance, almost at haphazard, from the so-called *Housebook*, authorised by the General Lutheran Conference,[1] the following characteristic prayer: "I render Thee, O true and faithful God, praise, honour, and thanks, for Thy goodness and graciousness, which Thou hast showed me this day, although I am a poor sinner, and not worthy to be called Thy child. But I know that Thy mercy is very great, and far greater than my sins, or the sins of the whole world. Therefore I confess to Thee all my sins and misdeeds, which I have committed this day, yea, and from my youth up, against Thee, and beseech Thee Thou wouldst forgive me, and pardon them, and of Thy grace have mercy upon me, as Thy dear child, and give me into the protection of Thy holy angels, that they may graciously protect me this night, and all future time, from all harm to body and soul. To Thee I commit myself, to be entirely Thine own, in death and life. Let me for ever be and abide with Thee." In such utterances love and trust have cast out fear, and, in reliance on Christ's promise, men and women live in perfect confidence with their Father and their Saviour. A similar consequence of the same faith is a robust and manly spirit, in which men go through the world with their heads up, looking God and man in the face, prepared to meet the

[1] 'Allgemeines Gebetbuch, ein Haus und Kirchenbuch,' 5th edition, 1887, Leipzig. 'Hausbuch,' p. 46.

troubles of life, and to bear the penalties which must, while this world lasts, attach to their sins; but fearing nothing, here or hereafter, because they know, by faith, that they have God's favour and forgiveness. "It is God's design," said Luther, "to have dauntless, calm, and generous sons in all eternity and perfection, who fear absolutely nothing, but, in reliance on His grace, triumph over and despise all things, and treat punishments and deaths as sport. He hates all the cowards, who are confounded with the fear of everything, even with the sound of a rustling leaf."[1]

Development of the Protestant ideal.

It must suffice, in this Essay, to indicate briefly the effect of this apprehension of the privilege of the Christian, as the forgiven and justified child of God, upon his relation to the ordinances of the Gospel, and to the ministry of the Church. While this doctrine was obscured, the inevitable tendency was to regard those ordinances as acts, or sacrifices, on our part, by which men hoped to procure the forgiveness or grace of which they felt the need. They were of the nature of works, by which that grace was won or merited. But from the point of view of the Reformed doctrine, they appeared rather as the manifestations and channels of God's gifts and graces to His redeemed and justified children. Instead of losing in importance, they became still more precious, because we could approach them, submit ourselves to them, and use them, in full assurance of faith. Thus the Confession, after the fourth article, on Justification, goes on to speak

[1] Deus autem proposuit habere filios impavidos, securos, generosos, eternaliter et perfecte, qui prorsus nihil timeant, sed per gratiæ suæ fiduciam omnia triumphent atque contemnant, pœnasque et mortes pro ludibrio habeant; cæteros ignavos odit, qui omnium timore confunduntur, etiam a sonitu folii volantis. (Luther, 'Resolutiones Disputationum,' Conclusio xix.)

of the Ministry in the Church, and says that, "in order that we may obtain the faith" of which it has spoken, "the ministry has been appointed of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments: 'For by the Word and Sacraments, as by instruments, the Holy Spirit is bestowed, who produces faith, where and when it seems good to God, in those who hear the Gospel.'" Respecting the use of the Sacraments, it says in the thirteenth article, that they were instituted—in words again echoed in our Articles—"not only to be badges or tokens of men's profession, but rather that they should be the signs and testimonies of the will of God towards us, set forth to arouse and confirm faith in those who use them. And therefore the Sacraments must be so used that faith may be applied to them, which believes the promises exhibited and shown forth in the Sacraments." Of Baptism, it is said in the ninth article "that it is necessary to salvation, and that by baptism the grace of God is bestowed; and that children are to be baptised, in order that, being offered to God in baptism, they may be received into the favour of God." Of the Lord's Supper it is said in the tenth article "that the body and blood of Christ are really present, and are distributed to those who partake of the Supper of the Lord."

But it is in relation to the latter Sacrament that the great change, or alteration of balance, produced by the Reformed doctrine, becomes most conspicuous. In the second part of the Confession the abuses are mentioned which the Reformers desired to see removed in respect to the Mass. Their anxiety to avoid, if possible, any breach with their opponents is illustrated by their re-

tention of this current name for the Holy Communion. They urge that their Churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass, for, they say, "it is retained among us, and is celebrated with the greatest reverence. Moreover, the accustomed ceremonies are almost all preserved, except that, for the instruction of the people, German prayers or hymns are used, in addition to the Latin; for this is the great use of ceremonies, to teach the unlearned; and not only does Paul prescribe that a tongue understanded of the people should be used in the Church, but it is so ordered by human law. Our people are accustomed to use the Sacrament together, if any are fit to receive it, which increases the reverence and the religious use of public ceremonies; for none are admitted to the Sacrament unless they have been previously examined. Men are also admonished of the dignity and the use of the Sacrament, what consolation it brings to fearful consciences, that they may learn to believe God, and to expect and seek for all good things from God. This is the worship with which God is well pleased; this use of the Sacrament cherishes piety towards God; and therefore Masses are not seen to be celebrated among our adversaries with more religiousness than among ourselves." They go on, however, to denounce the sale of Masses, and the multiplication, partly from this cause, of private Masses. The abuse springs, they say, from the false supposition "that the Mass is a work which does away the sins of the living and the dead, *ex opere operato*." Any such opinion, they say, is inconsistent with the Scriptures, and injurious to the glory of the Passion of Christ.

For the Passion of Christ was an oblation and satisfaction, not only for original guilt but also for all other sins. . . . Christ commands that we should do this in remembrance of Him; wherefore the Mass was instituted in order that, in those who use the Sacrament, faith might remember what benefits it receives through Christ, and might raise and console the fearful conscience. For to remember Christ is to remember His benefits, and to feel that they are truly offered to us. Nor is it enough to remember the history, for this even the Jews and the godless can do. But the Mass is to be celebrated for this purpose, that in it the Sacrament may be offered to those who have need of consolation; as Ambrose says, Because I always sin, I ought always to receive the remedy. And since the Mass is thus a communication of the Sacrament, there is observed among us one common Mass on every holy day, and also on other days, if any desire to receive the Sacrament, and it is administered to those who seek it. And this is no new custom in the Church, for the ancients, before Gregory, make no mention of private Mass, but speak very much of the common Mass. Chrysostom says, that the priest stands daily at the altar, and invites some to the Communion and warns others away. . . . And Paul gives this direction respecting the Communion, that they should wait one for the other, so that there might be a common participation."

It is observable, and is made a matter of complaint in the 'Papal Confutation,' that nothing is directly said of a sacrifice being offered in the Mass; and it is explained in the 'Apology for the Confession' that this omission was

deliberately made on account of the ambiguity of the word sacrifice. "It may mean," says the 'Apology,' "either a sacrifice of propitiation or a sacrifice of thanksgiving," and it is there explained that the Reformers denied that there was any sacrifice of propitiation, or of satisfaction for sin, offered in the Mass, but only a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and of ourselves, our bodies and souls, in response to the gracious sacrifice of Christ which we are commemorating.

It will therefore be clearly seen, upon the whole, what was the effect of the Reformed doctrine upon the view taken of this great central mystery of the Church, according to the Confession of Augsburg. While retaining the belief that it was in a certain sense a sacrifice, the Lutheran Reformers denied that it was in any sense a *propitiatory* sacrifice, and they regarded it primarily as the means for making Christians partakers of the Body and Blood of our Lord, which, they say, is really present and really distributed to those who partake. In short, the idea of Communion, and of the blessings received in Communion, is made the predominant idea; and accordingly, as a natural consequence, the word *Mass*, inseparably associated with the old conception, falls into disuse, and the Sacrament becomes more and more known as the Holy Communion or the Holy Supper.

A similar transformation passed over other ceremonies and practices. Private confession, for instance, was retained by the Lutherans; but the important part of it became, not the confession, but the absolution. The object which became predominant in the practice was not that a man should enumerate his sins, which was expressly stated to be un-

necessary; but that he should receive the promise of God's absolution at the hands of God's minister, and thus have his faith confirmed in God's forgiveness. The mischief of monastic vows is taught to consist in the belief, on which they were at least too largely founded, that their observance was a specially meritorious work, so as to be the means of obtaining forgiveness, not only for those who professed them, but for others. Rules about the use of food are taught to be mischievous, if they are looked on as meritorious, and not as simple means of discipline. In short, every state of life, lay as well as ecclesiastical, the life and work of the father and mother, the child and the servant, as much as that of the priest or the monk, was brought under this wide heaven of the grace and forgiveness of God; and thus the whole of life, with all its functions and duties, was made a school of perfection. The practical effect is summarily stated in the following passage from the Confession,[1] with which this review of the original and essential principles of Protestantism may be fitly concluded:—

"The precepts of God and the true worship of God are obscured, when men hear that monks alone are in a state of perfection; for Christian perfection is seriously to fear God, and further to conceive great faith in Him, and to trust, for Christ's sake, that we have God appeased; to ask of God, and surely to expect His help in all things we do, according to our vocation, and meanwhile diligently to do good works abroad, and to serve in our vocation. In these things is true perfection and the true worship of God, not in celibacy, or mendicity, or in a sordid dress. . . . There

[1] Part ii., art. vi.

are examples of men who have abandoned marriage, deserted the administration of their country, and hidden themselves in monasteries. This they called flying from the world, and seeking a kind of life which would be more pleasing to God; and they did not see that God is to be served in those commands which He has Himself delivered, not in commands which have been invented by men. That is a good and perfect life which has the command of God."

The Church of England a Protestant Church.

Such is the Protestant ideal, as stated in its original and primitive documents. This is the ideal which, in its great outlines, commended itself to Englishmen at the time of the Reformation, and of which the adoption proved the commencement of a new era in the life of the nation, as well as in the life of individuals. It is in this sense that the English nation is a Protestant nation, and that a Church which is to be the National Church of England must be Protestant too. In days when this Protestant character of the Church of England is questioned, it is a satisfaction to remember that it has been solemnly asserted, not only in Statutes of the Realm, but by both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury, at a critical moment of the history of the English Church. In 1689, in response to a message from King William III., the Bishops had proposed to thank his Majesty for the zeal he showed "for the Protestant religion in general and the Church of England in particular." In this expression they were echoing the words of the king himself, in whose mouth they were very natural. The Lower House, not less naturally, preferred that the Church of England should be foremost in the thoughts of a King of England, and induced the Upper

House to vary the phrase. But they went even further than the Upper House had proposed in asserting their Protestant sympathies. The address, as finally agreed to and subscribed by both Houses, says that "We, the Bishops and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury, in Convocation assembled, having received a most gracious message from your Majesty, hold ourselves bound in duty and gratitude to return our most humble acknowledgments for the same, and for the pious zeal and care your Majesty is pleased to express therein for the honour, peace, advantage, and establishment of the Church of England, *whereby, we doubt not, the interest of the Protestant religion in all other Protestant Churches, which is dear to us, will be the better secured.*"[1] Thus formally, in those critical days, did the Church of England associate itself with "all other Protestant Churches," and thus distinctly did its representatives proclaim that "the interest of the Protestant religion" was "dear to them." May that interest now and ever be dear to it, and may it never cease to be similarly associated with "all other Protestant Churches."

[1] Cardwell's Synodalia, pp. 696-698.

CHRIST'S TEACHING AND THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

By the Very Rev. F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

WE have recently been passing through "a crisis" in the Church of England,—in other words, through events which cannot but exercise a decisive influence upon the future of her history. And although the intensity of religious excitement is for the present subsiding, the ultimate issues which it has influenced may be more far-reaching than any of us can as yet measure or foresee. Views and practices have undoubtedly been gaining ground, during the last thirty years, which bear an avowed affinity to those of the Church of Rome, and which are openly vaunted by Roman Catholics—from the Pope and Cardinal Vaughan downwards—as proofs that the Reformation must have spent its force, and that the day of our return, as a nation, to our ancient allegiance to the papal see cannot be far distant. More than this, ingenious manuals of all kinds — some of them purely Romish — have been scattered broadcast among the members — and especially

among the younger and least protected members—of our congregations. One very notorious manual, meant to instruct "priests" in the mysteries of the confessional, was characterised by Archbishop Tait as "a disgrace to the community." Now, in the opinion of most Protestants, these views and practices were deliberately rejected by our fathers when, in the words of the prayer with which our Convocation is opened, "errores, corruptelas, et superstitiones olim hic grassantes, omnemque papalem tyrannidem, merito et serio repudiavimus." It is certainly a sign of the times that a very large number of our clergy now openly sneer at the name "Protestant." Yet of that name our Reforming fathers were not in the least ashamed. They were, indeed, so little anxious to obtrude a designation which might be mistaken to express a merely negative attitude that the word is not, I believe, once introduced into our Liturgy, Articles, or Homilies. It is always well to avoid words of which the real significance may be mistaken, and which tend in themselves to exacerbate controversy: but it must not be forgotten that, in protesting against deadly errors, the Reformers were at the same time protesting for essential and eternal truths. Hence the word "Protestant" was freely adopted even by such men as Archbishop Laud and Bishop Cosin. Laud, regarded by High Churchmen, though not by others, as an ideal character, did not hesitate to call himself a faithful Protestant, or to say when he stood on the scaffold that Charles I. was "as sound a Protestant, according to the religion by law established, as any man in the kingdom." Bishop Cosin, a man no less warmly approved

The word "Protestant."

by the same party, spoke of his hearty and affectionate union "with Protestants and the best Reformed Churches." It is well known that in their coronation oath our sovereigns swear to maintain "the Protestant Reformed religion established by law in this realm." We need, however, only use the name when it is necessary to emphasise the facts of history, and to call attention to the rock of primitive and Scriptural truth on which our Church was built.

Three essentials.

In times of religious controversy three things are specially necessary: first, the clear realisation and perfectly firm and fearless statement—without the least ambiguity or subterfuge—of the truths which we profess, and the reasons for which we hold them; secondly, a generous and undisturbed charity and forbearance, under whatever stress of provocation, towards those who differ from us; thirdly, the calmness and confidence of soul which arise from the humble conviction of our own fallibility and insignificance, and of God's transcendent infinitude and boundless compassion. It will always exercise over us a calming influence to remember that

"There is a hand that guides."

If the one unswerving aim of our lives be to attain to righteousness and true holiness, we may be sure that, however serious may be our intellectual mistakes, so long as they be not wilful, they will not be reckoned against us. "Man's nothing-perfect" will be overruled and purified by "God's all-complete."

It may not be superfluous to say a word on these three points.

As to the first and second, we must remind ourselves that we may not let cowardice, or love of ease, or a false conception of charity, lead us to shirk the duty of maintaining the convictions to which, by the whole force of our reason and conscience, we have been led. When need requires, it is our *duty* to state them, and the grounds on which we adhere to them,—though always without personalities and virulence. That would be but a pernicious form of "charity" which led us to the suppression of what we regard as God's truths.

As to the third point—the calming assurance that, to all who are perfectly sincere, God will not reckon any errors due to invincible ignorance—it may lead us to unite generous forbearance with unshaken fidelity. "Let every man be thoroughly persuaded in his own mind." If he have done his utmost to learn the will of God, he shall know the truth, and the truth shall make him free. Truth is great, and must in the end prevail. We may see thousands, on every side of us, lapsing into what we regard as error and apostasy; yet—

> "God's in His heaven,
> All's right with the world."

We know how in old days St Athanasius stood almost alone in his convictions—"Athanasius contra mundum"; yet all Christians now believe and confess, as he did, the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity. When St Francis of Assisi was heartbroken by the irregularities which so soon began to arise in his order, he went out at night to pray, and dreamed that God said to him, "Poor little man! I govern the universe; thinkest thou that I

cannot overrule the concerns of thy little order?" When Martin Luther began to despair about some of the troubles which followed the Reformation, he took comfort in the thought, "I cannot control Providence. If I thought that I could, I should be the veriest ass in the world. Therefore, O great God, I humbly leave all things in Thy gracious hands."

In this spirit let us turn to those subjects of controversy which lie at the very basis of all the recent religious discussions which have filled so many reams of our newspapers, and have furnished the topics for numberless speeches, sermons, and controversial books.

Three great questions.

They mainly turn on three great questions: (1) the position and authority of Christian ministers; (2) the right view of the Holy Communion; (3) the use of auricular confession. On these three subjects let us endeavour, in the plainest and simplest manner, to discover what was Christ's teaching, and what were the views held in the days of primitive Christianity. In those ages Christians were not removed by nineteen centuries, with their many aberrations and corruptions—but only by a brief interspace of time—from the immediate teaching of our Lord and His apostles. It is they who have handed down to us the inestimable heritage of the Christian faith.

But first of all I would lay it down as axiomatic—

Two axioms.

(i) That nothing can be necessary for salvation, either as regards opinions or practices, which was not required by our Lord or His apostles.

(ii) That no "view," or rite, or ceremony, or claim, can be regarded as forming an even remotely essential part of

the religious life, if it either runs counter to the inspired teaching of the New Testament, or can find no sanction in that teaching. We say with St Ambrose, "The things that we find not in Scripture, how can we use them?"—and with St Bernard, "Believe those things that are written: the things that are not written, seek not."

For Christians these axioms ought to be decisive. We believe that Christ was the very Word of God, God manifest in the flesh. He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"; and "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me"; and, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life"; and "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." If we do not accept these decisive proofs that we are bound only by what we are taught in Christ's own Gospel, we incur the weight of His stern censure:—

"Ye have made void the Word of God because of your tradition. Ye hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying,

> This people honoureth me with their lips,
> But their heart is far from me.
> But in vain do they worship me,
> Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

For true members of the English Church this principle is laid down in our Articles with unmistakable emphasis:—

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to Salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation."—Art. vi.

And in Art. xx. we are told that "The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation."

And further in Art. xxi. we are told that even General Councils have no authority to ordain any things "as necessary to Salvation, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture": and that, "being composed of fallible men, they both may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God."

Let us then bring to the final and supreme test of Christ's teaching and of primitive Christianity the controversies which have arisen about the three fundamental questions which I have mentioned.

I.

The Christian ministry.

First, as to the Christian ministry. It is well known that very different conceptions of what is meant by "a priest" exist in the Roman and the Reformed Churches.

In the Roman communion the word "priest" is applied to all fully ordained Christian ministers in the sense of the Greek ἱερεύς, and the Latin *sacerdos*, to mean "a sacrificing priest."

In the Reformed Churches the word "priest," when used at all, is only used for the members of the order intermediate between deacons and bishops. It never implies anything but "presbyter" or "curate" (in the old sense of the word in which it means one that has a "cure" or the charge of a parish). That our English Church uses the word "priest" exclusively in the sense of elder or presbyter, and deliberately rejects the notion of the ministry being a sacrificial priesthood, is undeniable. When the Presbyterians, at the Savoy Conference in 1661, wished the word "presbyter" to be substituted for "priest," the bishops declined to make the change, solely on the ground that "priest" is but a shortened form of "presbyter," and means exactly the same thing. In the practically authorised Latin translation of the Prayer-book made in 1670, the word "priest" is invariably rendered *presbyterus*, never once *sacerdos*.

Here, then, is a distinct and definite issue, respecting which we may ascertain alike the teaching of the whole English Prayer-book, of the New Testament, and the views of primitive Christians. If we are to abide by these, there cannot be even the shadow of a doubt that Christian ministers are simply elders, and are *not* sacrificing priests. No ingenuities of special pleading, no recalcitrations of prejudice, can possibly alter it, or weaken its significance.

For what are the facts? If there was one name more natural than another to apply to Christian ministers, had they been intended to perform sacrificial functions, it was the name ἱερεύς. It was the name with which the Apostles, and the early Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, were

most familiar. Among the Jews, for fifteen hundred years, their ministers had been priests, and had sacrificed burnt-offerings. Yet the name priest is deliberately and absolutely withheld from the ministers of the New Dispensation. The fact that they are not such "priests" is thus made one distinct characteristic of the New Dispensation. How little this was an "accident"—if we can even admit the possibility of accident in such solemn matters—is proved by the fact that had Christian ministers been intended in any way to continue or reproduce the abrogated functions of the old priesthood, then the name "priest" was the very first, the most familiar, and the most obvious name by which to call them. Yet among the ten or twelve other names applied to them in their different grades and offices—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, ministers, "bishops" (overseers), deacons, presbyters, helpers, interpreters, stewards—they are not so much as once, not even by way of distant metaphor, called "priests." Even St Peter does not dream of calling himself a ἱερεύς. He calls himself only "a presbyter," writing to his "fellow-presbyters." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, dealing so much at large on the subject of priesthood and sacrifice, and the way of access to God, never so much as alludes to any human priest as, in any sense whatever, an intermediary between the soul and God; or as offering any sacrifice; or as one whose mediation is in any sense whatever indispensable. He bids each man individually to come with boldness direct to the throne of grace in full assurance of faith. He knows nothing of any priest but One—even Christ, who offered, once and for ever, the one sacrifice of

Himself, and who, by that one offering of Himself, offered once, and once for all, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, so that "there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins." And he tells us distinctly that this priesthood in Christ is continuous, and "intransmissible" (*ἀπαράβατον*), —a priesthood that doth not pass to another.

But perhaps it will be said that the words "priesthood" and "priests" are applied to *all* Christians in the New Testament. Yes, they are so applied in one or two passages, and in a way which makes the previous arguments still more decisive. For in those passages (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6) there is not an even indirect allusion to any sacerdotal caste; but *all* Christians are (in an entirely secondary and metaphorical sense) called "priests." Justin Martyr calls all Christians an *ἀρχιερατικόν γένος Θεοῦ*. The Apostolic Fathers afford no shadow of defence for what is now known as "sacerdotalism." St Irenæus, recognising no priesthood but that of moral holiness and apostolical self-denial, says that "*all* the disciples of the Lord are priests and Levites"; and Clement of Alexandria never once applies the words "priest," "priestly," or "priesthood" to the Christian ministry.[1] It is expressly said that Christians only offer up spiritual sacrifices — the sacrifices, *not* of the Eucharist, but of praise and thanksgiving, and of themselves, their souls and bodies, unto God. None surely can deny that these are decisive facts. They speak volumes. They show that the title and office of the ministers of the Christian congregation were

[1] See for full details Bishop Lightfoot on "The Christian Ministry" (Philippians, pp. 343-347).

derived, not from the doomed Temple, with its abrogated sacrificial offerings, but from the synagogue, with its pulpit and its services of prayer and praise. And as regards this obvious conclusion, all our highest authorities are at one. Richard Hooker, the most judicious of English divines, the admired teacher of the early Tractarians, says: "In truth the word 'Presbyter' *doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable, than 'Priest,' with*" (mark the words!) "*with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ.* The Holy Ghost, throughout the body of the New Testament, making so much mention of ministers, doth not anywhere call them 'Priests.'" And the fact that the English word "priest," the French *prêtre*, the Italian *prete*, the German *priester*, are all derived from "presbyter" (or "elder"), not from the Jewish *cohen*, or the Greek ἱερεύς, or the Latin *sacerdos*, shows that the sacerdotal connotations which were afterwards added to the word did *not* originally belong to it. In full accordance with these views, Bishop Lightfoot, one of the wisest and most learned theologians of our century, says, as the result of an exhaustive inquiry: "*The Church of Christ has no sacerdotal system; it interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between men and God.*" According to the same high authority, there is not a trace of sacerdotalism in the genuine letters of St Ignatius. It practically began with the very ill-instructed St Cyprian, whose writings show great ignorance of the meaning of the Old Testament, and who—being a late convert—from lack of adequate training and insight, transferred the Levitic to the Christian ideal. Yet even Tertullian — whom St Cyprian regarded as his "master"—at the close of the

second century, asks the question, "*Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?*" ("Are not we laymen also priests?"), and says, "*Ubi tres sunt ibi ecclesia, licet laici!*"

Again, "priests" sacrifice at "altars"; and in the New Testament neither of the words for "altar"—neither *βωμὸς* nor *θυσιαστήριον*—is once applied, even in a metaphorical sense, to the Lord's Table. The latter word (*θυσιαστήριον*) occurs sixteen times in the New Testament, but never once in connection with the Holy Communion, which, in the most solemn of all Holy Communions, our Lord founded in the evening, after a meal, and at an ordinary table. To explain the words, "We have an altar," in Hebrews xiii. 10, of the Lord's Table, can only be done by an ingenuity which is ready to catch at any straw in support of preconceived opinions. The explanation turns the whole passage to nonsense. No great commentator, from Archbishop Lanfranc down to Bishop Westcott, has so explained it. St Ambrose says, in the prayer before Holy Communion (attributed to him), "Summe sacerdos, qui Te obtulisti Deo . . . in arâ Crucis pro nobis."[1] Medieval commentators like Rupert of Deutz and Pope Leo the Great, and even the highest of all medieval authorities, St Thomas Aquinas, rightly explain the word "altar" in that passage as a metaphorical allusion to the cross of Christ. "The only earthly altar," says the learned and eminent Bishop of Durham, "is the cross on which Christ offered Himself. . . . In the first stage of Christian literature there is *not only no example of the application of the word 'altar' to any concrete material object as the Holy Table, but there is no*

[1] See Bishop Westcott, Ep. to Hebrews, p. 462.

room for such an application." For the New Testament says expressly that, after Christ's one sacrifice, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." "The history of the word," adds Bishop Westcott, "affords an instructive illustration of the way in which spiritual thoughts connected with material imagery clothe themselves in material forms, until at last the material form dominates the thought." Those who follow the deliberately chosen language of the Church of England, throughout the whole Prayer-book, call it, as St Chrysostom and St Augustine called it, "the Table," "the Lord's Table," and "the Holy Table." The saintly apologists of the primitive Church had insisted to the heathen that "Christians have no altars." Nay, even at the close of the fourth century, the Emperor Julian, trained among Christians for years, taunted them with having no altars and no sacrifices; and the learned St Cyril of Alexandria—instead of denying the charge, and pointing to the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper—points only to "the sweeter savour of Faith, Hope, and Love."

In the Church of Christ, then, there were, in the true sense, no "priests," but only the one High Priest Jesus Christ; no altar, but, by way of metaphor, His cross; no proper sacrifice but the one offering of Himself, once offered, and once for all.

II.

The Holy Communion.

I pass on to the second subject—the disputes which have, alas! made of the blessed sacrament of peace a watchword of vehement religious warfare.

Zwinglian view.

(*a*) At the present time four main views are held about the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Of one of these, however—the view of Zwingli, who seems to have held that the Eucharist was a commemoration and nothing more—I need not speak, because it is not maintained by any Church.

Romish view. (Transubstantiation.)

(*b*) Of the other three views, one is the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, a doctrine not formally accepted by the Church of Rome till the Lateran Council of 1215. This doctrine is so emphatically rejected by our Church that I need say but little about it. It is based, like some inverted pyramid, on the crumbling apex of a misinterpreted metaphor—a metaphor of which the crude perversion would have seemed utterly inconceivable to those to whom it was addressed. As far as words go, "Christ seems to command," says St Augustine, "*facinus vel flagitium*, something horrible and monstrous. *Figura est ergo;* it is therefore a figure, bidding us lay up in our memory the passion of our Lord."[1] Anything distantly resembling the eating of literal flesh, or the drinking of literal blood, would have been unspeakably abhorrent to the Apostles and to all Jews. The words were spoken by the Lord as He stood living before them. When he said, "This is my body, given for you," His body had not yet been given; and they would have thought it a stupid literalism, an impossible folly, to regard the word "*is*" as meaning more than "represents"; or "is a spiritual and sacramental *symbol* of that body not yet given." When He said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you," it did not require more than a child's intelligence to see

[1] De Doctr. Christ., iii. 24.

that "a cup" could not *be*, but could only *represent* a covenant. When, at Capernaum, He said, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life," He was speaking to those who were perfectly familiar with the Eastern metaphor, in which "eating" and "drinking" simply mean close union with; as, in the Book of Ecclesiastes, Wisdom says, "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty";[1] or, as Jeremiah says, "Thy words were found and I did eat them" (Jer. xv. 16); or, as our Lord said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me": and, further, to avoid all excuse for perversion, He said, with unmistakable distinctness, "*The flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*" (John vi. 63). There is but one way—not two ways—of obtaining eternal life; and, therefore, since Christ said, "He that believeth on Me hath eternal life," to "eat His flesh and drink His blood" can only mean spiritual union with Him by faith. Indeed, all the adoration of the elements of bread and wine by Romanists seems amazing, even when we read the language of their own theologians. Cardinal Bellarmine said, "By His substance Christ does not occupy a place"; and Billuart said, "Christ is not in the sacrament as in a place"; and Cardinal Newman said, "Our Lord is locally in heaven. He is present in the sacrament only in substance, and substance does not require or imply the occupation of place. Our Lord then neither descends from heaven upon our altars nor moves when carried in procession. We can only say that He is present sacramentally: the mixture of His bodily sub-

[1] Eccles. xxiv. 21; comp. John iv. 14.

stance with ours is a thing which the ancient fathers disclaim." A Protestant, not a Roman Cardinal, might have written those sentences, and they show how much, as far as the doctrine is concerned, the frantic dispute is in great measure one of ill-defined words and of obstinate misunderstandings. Even the mighty Hildebrand, afterwards Pope Gregory VII., defended Berengar, who openly impugned the new doctrine; and this great Pope was accused by Cardinal Benno of himself doubting any material change in the elements. Even Innocent III., who established the Transubstantiation theory, said, "*A corporal presence is not to be sought for:* Christ is the food of the soul, and not of the flesh"; and again he said that, in the sacrament, "Christ gave what He willed to give, and what He willed to give He knows." Is not this exactly analogous to the famous answer of Queen Elizabeth?—

> "Christ was the word that spake it;
> He took the bread and brake it;
> And what that word did make it,
> That I believe, and take it."

Lutheran view. (Consubstantiation.)

(*c*) For, turning to the next view—Luther's view of Consubstantiation—what a mere metaphysical, incomprehensible, meaningless conception the word implies! When Zwingli and his friends were arguing that the Lord's Supper was simply a holy commemoration, we are told that Luther kept writing with his finger on the table, "Hoc est corpus meum," as though those words settled the controversy any more than "I am the door," or "I am the True Vine"; or any more than St Paul meant his words to be taken with wooden and impossible literalness, when he said that a

smitten rock followed the Israelites in the wilderness, and "that rock was Christ"; or when he says, "We, who are many, *are* one bread." Had Luther realised how common the metaphor was, he could not have invented so impossibly complicated a method of apprehending it. For what is substance? Not, as ninety-nine uninstructed persons out of every hundred suppose, the most material, but the most absolutely immaterial and undefinable of all imaginary entities. In metaphysics, in philosophy, in theology, substance has absolutely no meaning except that which remains—if indeed anything at all remains, which many philosophers have altogether denied, and which Lord Bacon calls an "unsound" and "fantastical" notion—when every conceivable attribute has been eliminated. Try in imagination to subtract from any object—a piece of bread or anything else—every possible property of sense: subtract its taste, its smell, its weight, its colour, its heat or cold, its visibility, its material particles, its occupation of a locality, and then, if you can imagine that something still remains which occupies no place, then that unknown, intangible, unimaginable underlying substratum (if there be such a thing at all except as a disputable, transcendental hypothesis) is called substance! and Luther's theory seems to have been, that with this supposed entity was united, as another entity, the very body and blood of Christ. That the bread and the wine, after consecration, remain in every particular bread and wine—look the same, taste the same, smell the same, pass through exactly the same changes as all other food, and, if left, decay and moulder, and may be devoured by animals or insects—no one dreams of denying; and yet

they are to be adored as though their underlying substratum was the flesh and blood of Him who is in heaven! "This presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the words of God," says Chillingworth, "the special senses of men upon the general words of God,—this deifying our own opinions and tyrannous enforcing them upon others, . . . hath been the fountain of all the schisms, and that which maketh them immortal." To higher beings surely these hypotheses, so furiously maintained, must be sorrowfully regarded as a ψόφος λόγων—a mere jargon of unmeaning words, illustrative only of the pride, the intrusiveness, and the lack of common-sense in theological speculators: but, alas!—

> "Man, proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority, . . .
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As makes the angels weep; who, with our spleens,
> Would all themselves laugh mortal."

Teaching of the Church of England.

(*d*) But the fourth view is the plain, unmistakable, often-repeated view of the Church of England—a view which more than sufficed our fathers; which for twelve centuries more than sufficed the saints of the Church of God. It is that Christ, in the Lord's Supper, is present only spiritually, and only in the heart of the faithful receiver; that, apart from the partaking of the sacrament, Christ is not, in any sense whatever, in the hands of the "priest," or locally on the Lord's Table; but is taken and eaten "only after a heavenly and spiritual manner," and only by faith. Our Church denies that there is any sacrifice in the Lord's Supper; it forbids all adoration of the consecrated elements, and all reservation of them. Our Com-

munion Service speaks of "the one oblation of Christ once offered"; and of "these Thy creatures of bread and wine" received "in remembrance" of Christ's death and Passion. It says expressly, in the rubric, that "the sacramental bread and wine *remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, for that were idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.*" And such has ever been the view of all our greatest and most authoritative divines. "The real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood," says Hooker, "is not to be sought in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver." Waterland, a high and acknowledged authority, quotes with approval the words of Dr Aldrich: "It is evident that, since the body broken and blood shed neither do, nor can, now really exist, they neither can be really present, nor literally eaten or drunk; nor can we really receive them, but only the benefits purchased by them." "Christ," said Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "is present in the sacrament to our spirits only." Bishop Thirlwall, one of the ablest prelates of modern days, says, "There is no presence of Christ in the Eucharist, differing in kind from that which is promised wherever two or three are gathered together in His name. . . . He is no more present on, or at the altar, than in the pulpit."[1] And we may well doubt whether the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—blessed as it is as a means of grace—has not been thrust into a wholly false perspective. We may well doubt whether, in modern language, and modern usage, it has not been degraded by the erring superstition of some, from a sacramental symbol into a mechanical fetish,

[1] Essays, p. 488.

when we recall that this "breaking of the bread," as it is called in the Acts of the Apostles, is not once alluded to by St John the divine in his gospel, his Epistles, or the Revelation; nor once by St Peter, St James, or St Jude; nor once even in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that "Epistle of the Heavenlies"; nor once even in the Epistle to the Hebrews, full as it is of questions about sacrificing; nor once in the three Pastoral Epistles; nor once in all St Paul's Epistles, except where he corrects abuses of it in the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians. We may well doubt if this could have been the case, if the Lord's Supper had been placed in the same absorbing predominance into which it has been thrust in later ages. In any case, there are two things eternally true—the one, that it is not any mechanical act, like the eating of the bread or drinking of the wine, which will in any degree save us, but faith working by love; and the other, as St Augustine said, "Crede et manducasti"—Believe, and thou hast eaten.

III.

Auricular Confession.

A third phase of recent controversy has turned on the Confessional. Here again it is sufficient for us to know that the demand of priests that confession should be made to them is absolutely unauthorised by the Word of God. Again I ask, Is the teaching of our Lord and His apostles a sufficient guide for Christians, or is it not? If it be, it should be enough to say that no single syllable authorising auricular confession, or confession to any one calling himself a priest, occurs in the entire New Testament from be-

ginning to end. The only passage which can be quoted—"Confess your sins one to another," James v. 16—points in exactly the opposite direction; for it is simply the admission of faults, not to any priest at all, but by all Christians, among one another, as we do in our public services. Our Church does indeed recognise rare and special crises where, if a Christian wishes, he may quiet a troubled conscience by voluntarily asking the advice and sympathy of any man whom he may regard as able to support and comfort him by the ministry of the Word. But it is God only who can forgive sins; and the *Absolvo te*[1] of a poor, miserable, sinful human being—if taken in any other than a declaratory and hypothetic sense—is a form unscriptural, unprimitive, uncatholic; unheard of for twelve centuries even in the Romish Church; unheard of to this day in the Eastern Church; of which the propriety, even when first admitted in the thirteenth century, was challenged by eminent Romish theologians; a form which is absolutely needless for any who sincerely repent, and absolutely null and valueless to any who do not. "What have I to do with men?" says St Augustine. "Before God," says St Jerome, "let the truth of realities be sought, not the opinion of priests." "Who and what are you," asks Tertullian, "in this claim to forgive?" It is a prerogative of God, not of a priest. Nor is it of the least avail to quote here the words, "Whosesoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain they are retained."

[1] It was not used before 1215 even in the Romish Church, and great Romish authorities like Cardinal Hugo, William of Paris, and William of Auxerre, protested against it.

Such a use of this passage is only another of many instances in which floods of error, excluded by all Scripture, are let in through the narrow aperture of one misinterpreted text. Scripture is *the meaning* of Scripture, not a false adducement of its words. This text was *not addressed to priests at all*, but to all Christians: it applies to classes, not to individuals: it applies to Church discipline,[1] not at all to final forgiveness, least of all to the absolution of individual priests. The false application of it has been rejected by the greatest theologians; and in age after age, and country after country, has been prolific — as it is to this day — of abuses indescribably disastrous. "Auricular confession" was utterly unknown to primitive Christianity. It was not ordered as a necessity even in the Romish Church till 1215; and it would be easy to show by overwhelming masses of most cogent evidence, as well as by the evidence of many popes and saints, and by the condition of the cities and countries in which it prevails unquestioned, that it contributes absolutely nothing to the cause of morality, and that no practice has been more decisively condemned, age after age, by the unanimous voice of history.

So far, then, I have, slightly and briefly, touched on truths which would admit of extended and overwhelming argu-

[1] This was the view of so high an authority as Wheatley, and he pointed to the prayer in the service for the Visitation of the Sick, which immediately follows the "I absolve thee," and says, "Preserve and continue this sick member *in the unity of the Church.*"

ment. It has been my object, with no intentionally irritating word, to state the indisputable doctrines of our Reformed Church. But, next, I would earnestly urge upon all the duty of perfect charity towards all who think otherwise. It is not by our opinions, but by our lives, that, through Christ's mercy, we shall be saved. Christ held up the hated and heretical Samaritan as an example of conduct to the boastful and scrupulous Pharisee; and He said that many should come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God when the children of the kingdom shall be cast out. "The older I grow," wrote the saintly Richard Baxter, "the smaller stress I lay on these controversies and animosities. . . . The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, are now to me my daily meat and drink." "I am sick of opinions," said that saint of God, John Wesley; "I am weary to bear them. My soul loathes such frothy food. Give me solid substantial religion; give me a humble lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good fruits; laying himself out in the work of Faith, the patience of Hope, the labour of Love. We may hold many wrong opinions, and yet go to heaven. But without love, what will knowledge avail us? Just as much as it avails the Devil and his angels." While we give unswerving allegiance to truths which we learn,—not from fallible priests and erring Churches, but solely from the teaching of our Lord and His apostles,—we may remember that men's minds differ; and many may be irrevocably stereotyped in errors which we regard as full of peril. But heaven is large enough to hold us all, and we believe that these—with

their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb—sons of the Church of Rome, like St Thomas Aquinas, and St Francis of Assisi, and St Vincent de Paul, and Father Matthew, and Father Damien, shall sit side by side, in an ecstasy of peace and rapture, with Reformers like Melanchthon, and Cranmer, and with Ken, and Wesley, and Whitefield, and Watts, and Doddridge; and with Dissenters like John Howard and Elizabeth Fry.

> "Love is the famous stone
> Which turneth all to gold;
> For that which God doth touch and own,
> Cannot for less be told."

THE VOICE OF THE FATHERS.

By the Rev. CHARLES H. H. WRIGHT, D.D., Ph.D.

"THE voice of the Fathers," on which the writer has been asked to contribute thoughts for the present volume, is one which can be only treated superficially within the limits of an essay. The full treatment of the subject would demand the compilation of a new 'Catena Patrum.' Works of that character have been often drawn up at times in which the Church of Christ has found herself disquieted by an outburst of religious controversy, requiring an appeal to the voice of antiquity. But no catena of patristic authorities, however carefully prepared and useful it may be, can be relied on as an exponent of patristic thought. Nor can any such compilation of passages be expected to satisfy persons who, on important theological questions, belong to a different school of thought than the compiler.

The full treatment of the subject requires a new 'Catena Patrum.'

The catena of patristic authorities appended by Dr Pusey to his famous sermon on the Eucharist[1] laid claim to be

Dr Pusey's Catena.

[1] The work here referred to is: 'The Doctrine of the Real Presence as contained in the Fathers from the death of S. John the Evangelist to the Fourth General Council vindicated,' in Notes on a Sermon, "The Presence

Its high pretensions.

as complete as was then possible, and to be free from all theological bias. The claim, however, has been carefully examined and "found wanting." At the close of some four hundred pages of citations on the question of the Eucharist, Dr Pusey ventured thus to express himself: "I have now, as I could in the space of time which seemed open to me before this fundamental doctrine might be disputed before a legal tribunal,[1] gone through every writer

of Christ in the Holy Eucharist," preached A.D. 1853 before the University of Oxford. By the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D., &c. J. H. Parker, Oxford and London, 1855. 8vo, pp. 722.

The case of Ditcher *v.* Denison.

[1] The trial, in anticipation of which Dr Pusey preached that sermon, and published the Catena mentioned above, was the case of Ditcher *v.* Denison. Archdeacon Denison was accused of contradicting the 28th and 29th Articles of Religion by maintaining "that the body and blood of Christ become so joined to and become so present in the consecrated elements by the act of consecration that the unworthy receivers receive in the elements the body and blood of Christ." The case was much discussed from the spring of 1853 up to October 22, 1856, when the sentence of deprivation was pronounced. The suit was, after all sorts of delays and attempts to hinder its being adjudicated on, heard at length in open court by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr J. B. Sumner), sitting in person, with the Right Hon. Dr Lushington, Judge of H.M. High Court of Admiralty, the Dean of Wells (G. H. S. Johnson), and the Rev. C. A. Heurtley, D.D., Margaret Professor of Theology in the University of Oxford, acting as assessors. An appeal was made on behalf of Archdeacon Denison to the Court of Arches, on the technical ground that more than the two years required by the Church Discipline Act of 2 & 3 Vict. had elapsed between the commission of the alleged offence and the citation to appear before the Archbishop at Bath. This latter was held to be the legal commencement of the suit, and the Dean of Arches on that ground, and that alone, pronounced the proceedings of the court at Bath to be invalid and null. Mr Ditcher appealed against that decision to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which, on that technical point, dismissed the appeal, but without costs. Archdeacon Denison, therefore, though condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury of teaching doctrines contrary to the 28th and 29th Articles, retained until death all his preferments in the Church. As far as doctrine was concerned, the judgment of the Archbishop remained in full force; but as far as any legal

who in his extant works speaks of the Holy Eucharist, from the time when St John the Evangelist was translated to his Lord to the date of the Fourth General Council, A.D. 451, a period of three centuries and a half. I have suppressed nothing; I have not knowingly omitted anything; I have given every passage, as far as in me lay, with as much of the context as was necessary for the clear exhibition of the meaning" (p. 715).

Strange statement of Dr Pusey.

In the preface to the published discourse Dr Pusey affirmed that "nothing, throughout the whole sermon, was further from my thoughts than controversy." The statement was a strange one for an Oxford professor to make, in face of the well-known teaching of the standard divines of the Church of England on the points at issue. And, however the word "controversy" might be disclaimed, Dr Pusey's interference in the dispute between Mr Ditcher and Archdeacon Denison was itself of a highly controversial character. The challenge Dr Pusey flung down was soon accepted. Dr

consequences were concerned, that judgment became inoperative. The Judicial Committee appended to the decision the rider: "Of course, it is understood that upon the question of heterodoxy, the question whether the respondent has at any time uttered heretical doctrine or committed any ecclesiastical offence, their Lordships have intimated no opinion." The decision of the Judicial Committee will be found in Brodrick and Fremantle's 'Collection of the Judgments of the Judicial Commitee of the Privy Council in Ecclesiastical Cases relating to Doctrine and Discipline,' with a preface by the Lord Bishop of London (Dr Tait), and a Historical Introduction. London: J. Murray, 1865. Of importance is 'A Statement of the Proceedings in the Case of Ditcher *v.* Denison,' illustrating the present condition of the Church of England, and the dangers which threaten the maintenance of sound doctrine in that Church from the operation of the Church Discipline Act. By the Rev. Joseph Ditcher, M.A., Vicar of South Brent, and formerly Principal Acting Surrogate and Judge of the Consistorial Episcopal Court of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. London: Hatchards, 1858.

Dr Pusey's challenge accepted by several.

Thirlwall, Bishop of St David's, satisfied himself with uttering wise words of warning. Many of the bishops clearly expressed their opinions in their Charges; and not a few eminent theologians, now undeservedly decried, entered into the lists. The work of the Rev. William Goode, afterwards Dean of Ripon, ought not to be forgotten.[1] The valuable contributions made to the controversy in the writings of that day, like the great works of the English Reformers, which, under the influence of a too short enthusiasm, were published by the Parker Society, were, alas! suffered too soon to fall into the background. The evangelical party as a body miscalculated the strength of the parties opposed to them. They proceeded to take off their heavy armour before the battle of the Reformation had been decisively won, and, with an almost unaccountable perverseness, kept aloof as a body from "controversy," and sought to devote their whole attention, in and out of the pulpit, to what was termed "practical religion."

Dr J. Harrison's works.

Among the works drawn forth by that controversy were those of Rev. John Harrison, D.D., and Rev. Charles Hebert, D.D. The necessarily dry and tedious character of those works, with the sad fact that the prevailing "fashion" of the day has, ever since their publication, set in strongly in the direction of the Tractarian school, has told heavily

[1] 'The Nature of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist; or, The True Doctrine of the Real Presence,' vindicated in opposition to the Fictitious Real Presence asserted by Archdeacon Denison, Mr (late Archdeacon) Wilberforce, and Dr Pusey: with full proof of the real character of the attempt made by those authors to represent their doctrine as that of the Church of England and her divines. By Rev. Wm. Goode, M.A., Rector of St Margaret's, Lothbury, &c. London: Hatchards, 1856. Second edition, 2 vols.

against their study.[1] Although Dr Pusey lived on till 1883, he never condescended to reply. Ill health, indeed, was partly, but only partly, the cause of that silence. A few years later Dr Pusey was practically past work, and ceased to take much interest in controversy. When Dr Hebert's work appeared, Dr Pusey was, however, fully conscious of the growth of his opinions throughout the length and breadth of the Church of England. He saw that the evangelical party in the Church was helping its opponents by a desire for "peace," and by a determination to put the most charitable construction upon the words and acts of opponents. Had similar principles prevailed in Apostolic

No reply from Dr Pusey.

[1] Dr Harrison was a voluminous writer. His important contributions to the controversy were—(1) 'Whose are the Fathers? or, The Teaching of certain Anglo-Catholics on the Church and its Ministry, contrary alike to the Holy Scriptures, to the Fathers of the First Six Centuries, and to those of the Reformed Church of England.' With a Catena Patrum of the first six centuries and of the English Church of the latter half of the sixteenth century. London: Longmans, 1867. 8vo, pp. 728. (2) 'An Answer to Dr Pusey's Challenge respecting the Doctrine of the Real Presence,' in which the doctrines of the Lord's Supper, as held by him, Roman and Greek Catholics, Ritualists, and High Anglo-Catholics, are examined and shown to be contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and to the teachings of the Fathers of the first eight centuries, with the testimony of an ample Catena Patrum on the same period. Longmans, Green, & Co., 1871. In two volumes, pp. 674 and pp. 386. (3) 'The Fathers *versus* Dr Pusey:' an exposure of his unfair treatment of their evidence on the doctrine of the Real Presence. Longmans, 1873. Small 8vo, pp. xxxii, 180. (4) 'Letters to the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D.,' on his unfair treatment of the testimony of the Fathers concerning the doctrine of the Real Presence. With a repetition of that doctrine. Religious Book Society, 1877. 8vo, pp. 50, in double columns.

Dr Hebert's work is also a ponderous Catena. It is entitled, 'The Lord's Supper: Uninspired Teaching.' The first volume, from Clement of Rome to Photius, and the Fathers of Toledo (A.D. 74 to 891). Seeley, Jackson, & Halliday, 1879. Pp. xxxii, 642. The second volume, from Alfric to Canon Liddon of St Paul's, London (A.D. 969-1875). 1879. Pp. xl, 826.

days, the Epistles to the Galatians, or those to the Corinthians, with many other Epistles in the New Testament, would never have been written.

From the commencement of his controversial career Dr Pusey used language which ought to have aroused suspicion. In his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr J. B. Sumner) in 1842, he stated that all he and his party required was peace. Speaking of the struggle, then in its infancy, he wrote: "On the issue hangs the destiny of our Church; if human frailty or impatience precipitates not that issue, all will be well, and it will have a peaceful close; yet a decisive issue it must have; the one must in time absorb the other; or, to speak more plainly, the Catholic, as the full truth of God, must, unless it be violently cast out, in time leaven and absorb into itself whatever is partial and defective, as it has already, very extensively" (p. 85).

Dr Pusey's statements.

Dr Pusey's prophecy has to a large extent been realised, especially amongst the clergy. The number of those who adhere to his views still increases every year. The teaching of Hooker and the Church of England stands no little danger of going by default.

The field of survey proposed.

As it is necessary to confine ourselves to narrow limits, we shall not attempt to review the large field covered by the investigations of Dr Pusey, still less attempt to enter into the wider fields brought under examination by Goode, Harrison, or Hebert. We shall, as far as possible, confine our attention to the writings of the Fathers up to A.D. 200, noticing briefly the "new light" which has been cast upon those early centuries by the discoveries of recent times.

Since the publication of Dr Pusey's Catena, modern

discovery has added considerably to the Christian writings of the earliest centuries. Among the additions to early Christian literature the discovery of the 'Didachè, or, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,' unearthed by Archbishop Bryennius of Nicomedia in the Phanar Library, Constantinople, and published by him in 1883, was a "find" of the highest importance. That work may probably be assigned to a date as early as A.D. 120, and can scarcely be regarded as later than the close of the second century. It is not possible for us here to review the discussions to which that discovery has given rise, or even to give a list of the literature of the work.

Patristic finds—the 'Didachè.'

Nearly ten years earlier, in 1875, the same Greek bishop discovered the full Greek text of 'The Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians,' and also a fuller text of the so-called 'Second Epistle,' which, by giving the conclusion of that document, confirmed the hypothesis which had been before put forward that the work in question was an ancient homily intended to be read in churches. The discovery of the 'Diatessaron of Tatian,' or the Life of Christ compiled from the four Gospels, first brought to light by Dr Moesinger's edition of Aucher's translation of the Armenian version of the Syriac, published at Venice, 1876 (and afterwards supported by the Arabic translation published at Rome in 1888 by Ciasca), was a discovery of still greater interest. That "find," though of special importance from an evidential point of view, has, however, no bearing on the subject of the present essay. Of the long-lost 'Apology of Aristides, the Philosopher of Athens,' fragments in Armenian first came to light in 1878, and the

Additional remains of Clement of Rome.

Tatian's 'Diatessaron.'

Aristides' 'Apology.'

entire work was ten years later discovered in a Syriac version in the library of the convent of St Catherine on Mount Sinai in 1889, and the larger portion of the original Greek recovered by Dr J. Armitage Robinson, now Canon of Westminster. That Apology, although its date is not yet conclusively settled, can scarcely be later than the reign of Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-161).

Controversies of our day. The "Real Presence."

The object of the present essay is to adduce out of the patristic writings of those times some thoughts new and old, which may be helpful in the controversy of the present time. The most important questions now under discussion are those more or less connected with the doctrine of "the Real Presence" in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. That is, whether, when the words of consecration are pronounced by a duly qualified priest, the body and blood of the Lord Jesus become attached to the consecrated bread and wine, so that Christ is actually present under the veils of bread and wine, and ought to be therein locally adored. Or whether, as the Roman and Greek Churches teach, the entire substance of the bread and wine becomes converted into the body and blood of Christ, so that, although the appearances of bread and wine remain unchanged, those elements are in reality no longer present, but in their place the body and blood of Christ are verily and truly present.[1] The power supposed to be exercised by the priest in the so-called "sacrament of penance" is but the result of the sacerdotal

[1] This is the distinct teaching of the Council of Trent, and it is almost equally clear that it is the doctrine taught in the Greek Churches. See my "Service of the Mass in the Greek and Roman Churches." (R. T. S.)

authority with which it is supposed he has been originally endued,[1] and which authority is considered to be transmitted by "apostolical succession."

Apostolical succession.

The Tractarian theory of apostolical succession, which will be slightly touched upon in our essay, implies much more than the mere "historical episcopate." For according to the Tractarian writers the channel of the apostolical succession is the only one whereby "authority to execute the office of a priest in the house of God" is conveyed; it is the only channel whereby the so-called "Real Presence" is brought about, and at least the ordinary means whereby "divine grace" is conveyed to men's souls. That "succession" can, according to the theory, only be communicated through an unbroken chain of bishops, and hence episcopacy is regarded as essential to a Church of Christ.

Hence it may be seen how much depends upon the truth or falsehood of the doctrine of "the Real Presence" in the consecrated elements at the Lord's Supper. It is, therefore, not a little significant in turning to the earliest Fathers to be compelled to observe how casual is the mention made in their writings of the Lord's Supper, which fact is scarcely consistent with the stupendous doctrines formulated concerning that feast in later times.

Chronological order.

In the short summary which we can give of the teachings on this head of the early Fathers, it may be well to notice their writings somewhat in chronological order. It must, of course, be borne in mind that there is much difference

[1] See 'A Vindication of the Bull Apostolicæ Curæ.' A Letter on Anglican Orders, by the Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster. Longmans, 1898. Pp. 36, 37.

of opinion as to the date of several of those writings. Such differences, however, do not affect the main point under discussion. We commence with the "Epistle of Barnabas."

The Epistle of Barnabas.

It is now generally admitted that the writer of that epistle was not the fellow-traveller of the Apostle Paul. The blunders into which the writer of the epistle has fallen upon matters (as, for instance, those connected with the ritual of the Day of Atonement)[1] with which all intelligent Jews must have been familiar, are sufficient to prove this. But although the epistle did not come from the pen of that great "apostle of the Churches," it was unquestionably a very early production. It can scarcely be placed later than A.D. 150; while the references to the destruction of the Temple by Titus, and to the interpretation of Daniel vii. set forth in the 4th chapter, are in favour of the view held by Dr Salmon and other scholars, that its composition should be placed nearly a century earlier, at some time between A.D. 70 and 79. If the latter conclusion be correct, the work is not only the earliest of "the Apostolic Fathers," but actually older than several books of the New Testament. Internal evidence shows the writer to have been a Gentile whose theology was in the main orthodox, but who had not a thorough acquaintance with the Old Testament Scriptures, although he constantly refers to those books, and thought himself in some points able to comprehend their hidden or mystical interpretation. The phenomena of the book lead to the conclusion that its writer wrote at a distance from the Holy Land.

[1] Tertullian has fallen into the same blunders. See book iii. chap. vii. of his treatise 'Against Marcion.'

Barnabas calls special attention to the abolition under the new dispensation of sacrifices, burnt-offerings, and oblations, and even of the use of incense. The abolition of those things in the Messianic times he speaks of as predicted by the prophets. God, writes he, "has therefore abolished these things, in order that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, being without the yoke of necessity, might not have the offerings made by man (*μὴ ἀνθρωποποίητον ἔχῃ τὴν προσφοράν*)"[1] (chap. ii.) Whatever be the exact force of that expression, it can have no reference to the Lord's Supper, which is nowhere spoken of throughout the entire epistle, although it contains many references to baptism, and puts forth peculiar views as to the cross. The epistle says that Moses made "a figure (*τύπον*) of the cross," observing that when Moses stretched out his hands[2] at Rephidim (Exod. xvii. 11), he made at that time, under the Spirit's direction, as well as later when he made the serpent of brass (Num. xxi. 9), "a type (*τύπον*) of the cross and of Him who was to suffer thereon" (chap. xii.) As the writer of this epistle was disposed to make such use of fanciful analogies to, or representations of, things under New Testament times, his complete silence in regard to the Eucharist is very remarkable. His silence on that point is scarcely consistent with the idea that he had any belief whatever in the dogmas connected with that sacrament which were so characteristic of the later times of the

Barnabas on abolition of sacrifices.

Barnabas on types; silence on the Lord's Supper.

[1] The old Latin version of the epistle omits the negative, and renders, *humanam habeat oblationem*, "might have a human oblation."

[2] *ἐξέτεινεν τὰς χεῖρας*. This is, of course, a gloss on, and an addition to, the Mosaic record, whether as represented by the Hebrew original or by the Septuagint translation of the passage.

Church's history. The silence of Barnabas on such points, though not absolutely decisive, possesses therefore a peculiar significance.

Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians.

The next patristic writing in order of antiquity (if indeed it be not earlier than the Epistle of Barnabas) is the well-known "Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians." It had long been noted that that epistle, known to European scholars through the Alexandrian Codex, had a gap at the end of chap. lvii. The Alexandrian MS. was for centuries the only one known to exist. Archbishop Bryennius, then of Serræ, afterwards of Nicomedia, discovered in 1875, in the Phanar Library at Constantinople, another complete Greek MS. of the two epistles ascribed to Clement; and almost simultaneously the late Professor Bensly discovered a Syriac translation of both works in a MS. belonging to M. Mohl's collection, which MS. had been purchased for the Library of the University of Cambridge. Those MSS. have been fully described by the scholars who discovered them, and have been since described and commented on by the late lamented Bishop Lightfoot in his great edition of the Apostolic Fathers.

Date of composition.

The Epistle to the Corinthians contains references to the persecution under Nero (chap. v. and foll.), and it alludes also to another persecution by which the Church at Rome was then threatened, or through which it may have been actually passing. The latter trial can be no other than the persecution under Domitian. The epistle consequently belongs to the close of the first century, and must have been written prior to A.D. 96. It was written on behalf of the Church of the Romans by Clement, probably Bishop

of the Church in Rome. This Clement was, as Bishop Lightfoot conjectures, "a man of Jewish descent, a freedman, or the son of a freedman, belonging to the household of Flavius Clemens, the Emperor's cousin." The evidence on which the Bishop bases this conclusion cannot be here discussed, but seems on the whole satisfactory.

Clement mentions only two orders of clergy.

Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians is of special importance as showing that in the Church of Corinth, as then constituted, there were but two orders of the Christian ministry. Those were the presbyters and the deacons. See Lightfoot's notes, especially on chap. xlii. (p. 127 ff.), and on chap. xliv. (p. 132 ff.) The presbyters at Corinth were at that time styled bishops. No idea was yet expressed of the episcopate, as a third distinct order of the Christian ministry, being essential to the existence of a Christian Church. Lightfoot has well pointed out that although there is a reference made in chap. xl. to the existence of a threefold ministry in the Jewish Church, consisting of the high priest, the priests, and the Levites, and although the affirmation is made that there is an analogy between the Church of the Old and that of the New Dispensation, that analogy does not extend to the threefold Christian ministry, which is not mentioned. Clement's epistle only speaks of "bishops and deacons," like St Paul in Phil. i. 1. The writer's intention was simply to point out that God, who is a God of order and not of confusion, manifested in ancient days His will that sacred ministrations should be performed through the instrumentality of definite persons, and performed in set places. That argument was made use of to show the importance of order in the Christian

Church, and to induce the Corinthians to restore to their episcopate certain presbyters who, although blameless in office, had been by means of a disorderly schism at Corinth ejected from that position; notwithstanding that some of those very presbyters had been appointed directly by the apostles, and others by eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church (chap. xliv.) In alluding to their ordination no reference is, however, made to the "laying on of hands," though that was probably understood. In arguing his case Clement, however, it must be observed, goes beyond the directions on those matters set forth in the New Testament.

It is scarcely to be wondered at, when one calls to mind the mistaken use which the later Puritan divines made of Old Testament analogies, that Clement of Rome, at that early date, when the fatal consequences of using loose language had not been foreseen, should have gone too far in appropriating the language of the Jewish dispensation to the Church after "the time of reformation" (Heb. ix. 10).

Clement appropriates Jewish phraseology.

If Clement speaks, in chap. xl., of the Levitical "services" (λειτουργίαι) and "ministrations" (διακονίαι), it did not seem strange to him to speak (chap. xliv.) of Christian presbyters as having "ministered" (λειτουργήσαντας), and of their ministrations (λειτουγίαι). So far he was on safe ground. For those Greek expressions are not necessarily sacrificial terms. They are used in the New Testament not only of all kinds of "ministering," but even of supporting Christian teachers by gifts, and of the services rendered by angels to men (Heb. i. 24). The usage of those terms in the LXX. is still wider (comp. 1 Kings i. 4). Clement was, how-

ever, treading on more slippery ground when he alludes to several passages of the Old Testament in which "sacrifice" is spoken of. It is true that he always employs that and cognate expressions in reference to the sacrifices of prayer and praise, and that he does not distinctly employ such phraseology in reference to the Lord's Supper.[1] The connection, indeed, in which he speaks (in chap. xliv.) of the presentation of *the gifts* (*τὰ δῶρα*), and of the *offerings* (*τὰς προσφόρας*) by the presbyters, was certainly a distinct step out of the bounds drawn in the Epistle to the Hebrews, although his statements contrast favourably with the phraseology which came into use in a later age. Bishop Lightfoot (Clement, vol. ii. p. 135) is, therefore, right when he says that "the sacrifices, offerings, and gifts, therefore, are the prayers and thanksgivings, the alms, the eucharistic elements, the contributions to the agape, and so forth." After citing several passages from the 'Apostolic Constitutions,' the Bishop proceeds: "These passages show in what sense the presbyters might be said to 'offer the gifts.' They led the prayers and thanksgivings of the congregation, they presented the alms and contributions to God, and asked His blessing on them in the name of the whole body. Hence Clement is careful to insist (chap. xl.) that these offerings should be made at a right time, and in the right place, and through the right persons. The first day of the week had been fixed by apostolic authority not only for common prayer and breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7), but also for collecting alms (1

"Gifts" and "offerings" in Clement.

[1] So, for instance, in chap. xviii., in chaps. xxxv. and xxxvi., and in chap. lii. In chaps. xl. and xli. he is almost led beyond the lawful bounds, but still he keeps within the fence.

Cor. xvi. 2), and the presbyters, as the officers appointed by the same authority, were the proper persons to receive and dispense the contributions."

No "priesthood." The necessity of order.

It should be carefully noted that nowhere in the epistle is the name priest (ἱερεύς) used as a synonym for presbyter. The only distinct mention of the Lord's Supper is in chap. xli., "Let each of you, brethren, in his own order give thanks (εὐχαριστεῖτω) unto God, maintaining a good conscience, and not transgressing the appointed rule of His service, but acting with all seemliness." Order is insisted on, and respect to the presbyters as those who had been appointed to conduct an orderly service. But of a great and stupendous sacrifice of Christ Himself under the appearances of bread and wine there is not one word. "Jesus Christ is still the High Priest of our offerings, the Guardian and Helper of our weakness" (chap. xxxvi.), "the High Priest and Guardian of our souls" (chap. lxi.)

Ignatius of Antioch. His date.

In our brief review of the statements found in the Epistles of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, we must refrain from all discussions as to the genuineness of those epistles, or on questions affecting the longer or shorter recensions. The martyrdom of that writer most probably took place at some period between A.D. 100 and 118. Although we cannot expect that the last word has been spoken even in that controversy, which has lasted for centuries, Bishop Lightfoot's researches in that field have been so thorough, and the learning brought to bear upon the subject so enormous, that we may for the purposes of this essay accept his conclusions as correct.

The more we study the epistles of Ignatius and ponder

over his arguments, the less inclined are we to accept him as our teacher. If his zeal was flaming, his language was equally so, and it occasionally borders on the extravagant. His example was for ages a fiery beacon to the Church, guiding her onward to holy warfare. His life, crowned with a glorious martyrdom, was a "living epistle known and read by all." But his epistles are far from exhibiting calm reason, or from being marked by sobriety of statement. All that he seemed to see before him was the terrible conflict with heathenism, then boasting of its might, and determined to crush Christianity in the bud. It was natural that Ignatius as a spiritual general should insist on order and discipline. It was well in a day of peril to urge the Christians to forget their petty differences and to rally around their bishops. The bishops or chief men of the Asiatic churches, called to the front by his burning words and example, were put on their mettle to "quit themselves like men." Ignatius saw intuitively that if the Church went into the contest as an aggregate of units, it would be ultimately trodden down in the strife. Hence Ignatius grasped at every argument in favour of union in face of the foe, and was naturally led on instinctively to magnify the position of "the president" or "bishop" of each church. It was no time in which to debate how the overseers or bishops had attained to that place of honour and of danger, nor was it a day in which one would feel disposed to discuss the rights of the several members of each community. In a serious battle any leader is better than none, if only the rank and file of the combatants can be induced to fight bravely under his banner.

Characteristics of Ignatius.

Ignatius and the Old Testament.

It does not surprise us, therefore, that Ignatius made no little use of old historical analogies, and that at times he was oblivious of the difference between Old and New Testament days. It is a striking fact that in days of persecution, and in times of war, men have been especially wont to look to the Old Testament writings. "What could we do in these terrible conflicts," exclaimed a chaplain in the fearful campaign of 1870-71, "if we had not the Book of Psalms with which to cheer our men onward?" The Psalms of the old church are full of the inspirations of the battlefield. We can scarcely, therefore, blame the Puritan soldiers who, as they rushed onward to their encounters, thought of the song of the saints of old: "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand" (Ps. cxlix. 6).

Ignatius and the Levitical unity.

With a mind imbued with Old Testament histories, it was at that time, therefore, natural that Ignatius, in urging the brethren to godly unity in contemplation of the bitter trials impending, should think of the one temple in Jerusalem and of the single altar of burnt-offering which it contained. Opposed as he was to Judaism from one point of view (see 'Magnes.,' chap. x., and 'Phil.,' vi.), he contemplated as his grand ideal the church or congregation in each locality meeting together like a kind of spiritual army with its president or bishop at the head, surrounded by the presbyters and deacons, and followed by a faithful and obedient laity. The ideal presented to the mind's eye required for its external exhibition that the so-called three orders should all meet together with the people in one place for prayer and thanksgiving and exhortation. Ignatius'

Ignatius and the three orders.

ideal was not that of these later days in which presbyters preside over separate congregations, and the so-called "deacons" are simply inchoate or unfledged presbyters. Chap. viii. of the epistle to Smyrnæans sets forth the ideal of the martyr of Antioch: "Shun divisions (*μερισμούς*) as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment. Let no man do ought of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop, or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church (*ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία*[1]). It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptise or to hold a love-feast (*ἀγάπην*); but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God; that everything which ye do may be sure and valid."

Ignatius's ideal of unity.

It is very easy to misunderstand the language of Ignatius. When he writes to the Ephesians (chap. v.), "Let no one be deceived; if any one be not within the altar [that is, as Bishop Lightfoot points out, "the precincts of the altar," *ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου*], he lacketh the bread." The read-

[1] This is the earliest instance of this expression in Christian literature, though it was probably common enough in the days of Ignatius. It had not yet, as Bishop Lightfoot points out in his note on the passage, attained the technical signification which it acquired later. It is used here of the universal Church as opposition to any particular body of Christians, possibly in the sense, too, of a congregation to which all Christians should belong.

ing "the bread of God" is somewhat doubtful. The *θυσιαστήριον* is not "the altar," but "the enclosure in which the altar stands, as the preposition *ἐντὸς* requires." So Lightfoot, who quotes several parallel examples.[1] The altar of burnt sacrifice in Levitical days, although the priests alone officiated at it, was not shut off from the people. Hence there seems to be more understood in Rev. xi. 1 than is generally supposed.

The altar enclosure.

"Within the sanctuary."

In a similar sense Ignatius writes to the Trallians (chap. vii.): "Be ye therefore on your guard against such men," the heretics and false teachers he had spoken of in the preceding chapters. "And this ye will surely be, if ye be not puffed up, and if ye be inseparable from [God] Jesus Christ, and from the bishop, and from the ordinances of the apostles. He that is within the sanctuary (*ἐντὸς θυσιαστηρίου*) is clean, but he that is without the sanctuary (*ἐκτὸς θυσιαστηρίου*) is not clean,—that is, he that doeth aught without the bishop and presbytery and deacons, this man is not clean in his conscience." Ignatius assumes here that the bishop, presbyters, and deacons held the orthodox doctrines: the heretics he refers to, the Judaisers and Docetics, seem to have been in that Church outside its pale. Bishop Lightfoot considers the reference made by Ignatius to the ordinances of the apostles is to "the institution of episcopacy." But the expression may have a much wider meaning.

It is unnecessary to refer to 'Magnes.,' vii., especially as

[1] In the Greek Church the name altar is also not confined to the Holy Table, but includes the entire sanctuary. See my "Service of the Mass in the Greek and Roman Churches" (R. T. S.), p. 19.

there is no new thought there expressed, and as there is some uncertainty about the text. But at the close of the 'Epistle to the Ephesians' (chap. xx.) the ideal of Christian worship is more fully described: "Assemble yourselves together in common, every one of you severally, man by man, in grace, in one faith, and one Jesus Christ, who after the flesh was of David's race, who is Son of Man and Son of God, to the end that ye may obey the bishop and the presbytery without distraction of mind; breaking one bread, which is a medicine of immortality, an antidote that we should not die but live in Jesus Christ for ever." The language used is distinctly allegorical. The breaking of bread in the agape or love-feast was still an act in which laymen had a part as well as the ministers. For there is no proof that the bread was given in such minute fragments as in the present day; and the partaking of the bread as a symbol of Christ might well be termed "a medicine of immortality" and "an antidote against death," but not in the sense that sins are forgiven by a participation of the sacrament, or that our resurrection bodies are built up by means of the consecrated material.

Ignatius on the Eucharist.

Consequently, when writing to the Trallians (chap. viii.), Ignatius is not backward to urge them, who were probably weak in faith, to arm themselves with gentleness, and "recover yourselves in faith, which is the flesh of the Lord, and in love, which is the blood of Jesus Christ." For as Lightfoot comments on that passage: "This is the food which their refreshment demands. The reference is only indirectly to the eucharist. The eucharistic bread and wine, while representing the flesh and blood of Christ,

Faith and love are Christ's "flesh and blood."

represent also faith and love. Faith is the flesh, the substance of the Christian life; love is the blood, the energy coursing through its veins and arteries."

"The bread of God" and Christ's blood, love incorruptible.

That the martyr did not think solely of the Lord's Supper is plain, for when writing to the Romans, and nearing the amphitheatre in which he was to die, he thus expresses himself (chap. vii.): "My love (*i.e.*, my earthly passion) hath been crucified, and there is no fire of material (carnal, *φιλόϋλον*) longing in me, but only water (comp. John iv. 10, 11) living and speaking in me, saying within me 'Come to the Father.' I have no delight in the food of corruption or in the delights of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for a draught I desire His blood, which is love incorruptible." In this wonderful passage it is abundantly clear that the reference was not to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but to the actual union with Christ in the land beyond the grave which the martyr was then eyeing so intently. The man that could write so metaphorically, although so beautifully, is not a writer whose language ought to be taken too literally.

The "one altar" and heretics.

The language used by him in an earlier stage, in the 'Epistle to the Philadelphians,' with regard to the Eucharist ought not to be pressed too far. In chap. iii. he speaks of the heretics who set forth false doctrine, and then proceeds in chap. iv. to say: "Be ye careful, therefore, to observe one eucharist; for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup unto union in His blood; there is one altar (*θυσιαστήριον*), as there is one bishop together with the presbytery and the deacons my fellow-

servants, that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it after God."

In 'Philippians,' chap. v., he makes this remarkable statement: "Your prayer will make me perfect [unto God], that I may attain unto the inheritance wherein I found mercy, taking refuge in the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus [possibly because the Gospel records that Jesus Christ was very man, and not a mere shadowy appearance as the Docetics imagined], and in the apostles as the presbytery of the church. Yea, and we love the prophets also, because they too pointed to the Gospel in their preaching, and set their hope on Him and awaited Him." Here, again, when we penetrate below the surface, are noble thoughts, but those thoughts are expressed in mystical, and by no means in literal, language.

The Gospel the flesh of Jesus.

In order to be perfectly fair, we have given in the case of Ignatius a far larger array of passages than even Dr Pusey has cited in his Catena, notwithstanding its pretensions of being complete, a contention which is far from being the truth. We close with two other passages. Writing to the Trallians (chaps. ii. and iii.), Ignatius thus expresses himself on his favourite topic of unity: "It is therefore necessary, even as your wont is, that ye should do nothing without the bishop; but be ye obedient also to the presbytery, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ our hope; for if we live in Him, we shall also be found in Him. And those likewise who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks, but servants of the Church of God. It is right, therefore, that they should

Ignatius on the importance of bishop, and presbytery, and deacons.

beware of blame as of fire. In like manner let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the bishop as being a type of the Father, and the presbyters as the council of God, and as the college of apostles. Apart from these there is not even the name of a church." There is no doubt considerable extravagance in such expressions; but if we were to substitute the name "president" for "bishop" the substitution would perhaps render the sense more evident, because what is said of the other orders requires also to be taken into account; and it will be seen that, as far as apostolical succession is concerned, such "succession" is ascribed to the presbyters and not to the bishop. Moreover, the indorsement which follows of the particular bishop who presided over the Church of Tralles ought also to be taken into due account. Bishop Lightfoot maintains rightly that there is no reference to the Eucharist in the expression "mysteries," which is here used in the Biblical sense of "revealed truths."

False doctrine and evil practices of Docetics.

We close with the passage in the 'Epistle to the Smyrnæans' (chap. vi.) Ignatius in the previous chapter says concerning those who were led astray, that by denying the reality of Christ's resurrection in the flesh they were in effect destroying their own immortality, and were carrying themselves like corpses to the grave; and in chap. vi. he speaks of the effect of their false doctrine on their lives. "They have no care for love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the afflicted, none for the prisoner, none for the hungry or thirsty. They abstain from eucharist and prayer, because they do not confess that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which (flesh) suffered

for our sins, which (flesh) the Father of goodness raised up again." The significance of the latter words is evident in the connection in which those words stand. The Docetic dreamers did not admit the reality of Christ's incarnation, or of his death. They did not, to use St Paul's expression, "proclaim the Lord's death" (1 Cor. xi. 26). Their "eucharist," although still called by that name, was no real "eucharist." For the reality of Christ's death is the central thought in that holy ordinance; the separation of body and blood (one might almost say of body and soul) was signified by the sacred symbols of bread and wine. But if Christ's death were not real, then His resurrection was no real resurrection, and therefore the martyr bishop only expresses in different phraseology the conclusion of St Paul: "If Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain. Ye are yet in your sins" (at best, as Ignatius would say, corpse-carriers, carrying lifeless bodies to the grave); "those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished" (1 Cor. xv. 13, 18).

The real death and real resurrection of Christ.

What would the martyr of Antioch have said of those who affirm, with the late Dr Littledale, that "the body and blood present [in the consecrated elements] at the Lord's Supper are that same body and blood which were conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, ascended into heaven, but they are not present in the *same manner* as they were when Christ walked on earth"? Ignatius on his part affirmed that Christ had real *flesh* (*σάρκα*) when He died on the cross, and had real *flesh* when He rose again. That is the Gospel

The bearing of Ignatius' doctrines on modern controversy.

teaching (Luke xxiv. 39). Hence He could eat and drink even after His resurrection. The words "this is My body" were spoken before Christ's death, and it is vain and idle to argue about the supposed powers of the resurrection body, which question ought not to have been introduced into the Eucharistic controversy.

Docetic description of Christ's body. Its possible bearing on the Eucharistic controversy.

It is interesting, now that we have in our possession such Docetic works as the 'Gospel of St Peter' and the 'Acts of St John,'[1] to observe how they speak of the Lord's body. The latter book in § vii. says thus: "Another glory will I tell you, brethren. Sometimes, when I would lay hold of Him [the writer is speaking of Christ before the closing scene of His public life], I met with a material and solid body; and at other times, again, when I felt Him, the substance was immaterial and bodiless (*ἄϋλον καὶ ἀσώματον*), and as it were not existing in any wise." Space for-

[1] The discovery of numerous portions of the 'Gospel of Peter,' and of the 'Apocalypse' of Peter, has already called forth a considerable literature. Among these may be mentioned, A. Harnack's 'Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus' (Leipzig, 1893); Oscar von Gebhardt, 'Das Evangelium u. die Apok. des Petrus' (Leipzig, 1893). Very useful for the general English reader is 'The Gospel according to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter.' Two Lectures by J. Armitage Robinson, B.D., and Montague Rhodes James, M.A. Cambridge University Press, 1892. 'The Gospel of St Peter, Synoptical Tables, with Translation, and Critical Apparatus.' Edited by H. von Schubert. Translated by Rev. J. Macpherson. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1893. Both of these apocryphal books are translated in the "Additional vol. of the Ante-Nicene Library, containing Early Christian Works discovered since the completion of the Series." Edited by Prof. Allan Menzies, D.D., of St Andrews. T. & T. Clark, 1897. The 'Acts of John,' with Greek text and translation, is given in the "Cambridge Texts and Studies," vol. v. No. 1. 'Apocrypha Anecdota,' second series, by M. R. James, Litt.D. Cambridge, 1897. Several other most interesting passages, in advance even of that cited above, could be given from this volume.

bids us to enter upon this most interesting subject, or to point out parallels which exist between the teaching of the Docetic heretics and those medieval visionaries who have described what they profess to have seen on the occasion of miraculous appearances of Christ in the consecrated Eucharistic elements.

The martyrdom of Polycarp is generally assigned to A.D. 155-160. The 'Epistle to the Church at Philippi' is the only production of Polycarp's pen. It contains no reference to the Lord's Supper, nor does it contain any allusion to matters of Church government, unless it is sought to extract such from the simple heading of the letter, "Polycarp, and the Presbyters that are with him, unto the Church of God which sojourneth at Philippi." The 'Epistle of Polycarp.'

There is, however, one passage which bears closely upon our subject, namely, when Polycarp speaks of Christian widows who "must be sober-minded as touching the faith of the Lord, making intercession without ceasing for all men, abstaining from all calumny, evil speaking, false witness, love of money, and every evil thing, knowing that they are God's altar (*θυσιαστήριον Θεοῦ*), and that all (sacrifices) are carefully inspected, and nothing escapeth Him either of their thoughts or intents or any of the secret things of the heart" (chap. iv.) Polycarp speaks of widows as "God's altar."

This is a remarkable illustration of the figurative use of *altar*, even when applied to the place of sacrifice. The thinkers of that age, habituated to the use of such figurative language, were easily led on to apply it to the sacramental symbols. Such instances, however, tend to warn us against the assumption that any language of that kind used in refer- Figurative language.

ence to the Eucharistic symbols can be regarded as proof of sacerdotal doctrines, properly so-called.

The newly discovered 'Apology' of Aristides. Sacrifices needless.

The newly discovered 'Apology of Aristides,' the philosopher of Athens, must now be noticed. It was probably written sometime about A.D. 140.[1] In speaking of the sacrifices of the heathen, Aristides thus writes of God: "He asks no sacrifice and no libation, nor any of the things that are visible" (p. 36). Speaking of the Jews, he somewhat strangely observes that "they too have gone astray from accurate knowledge, and they suppose in their minds that they are serving God, but in the methods of their action their service is to angels and not to God [this curious statement is not found in the Greek text, which is shorter], in that they observe Sabbaths and new moons and the passover and the great fast, and the fast, and circumcision, and cleanness of meats, which things not even thus have they perfectly observed" (p. 48).

Aristides' account of the Christians.

In the long description of the Christians given in this 'Apology,' no reference is made to the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper. Mention is however made of fasting as a means whereby poor Christians may be able to supply "the needy with their necessary food." Aristides thus describes the Christians: "They observe scrupulously the commandments of their Messiah: they live honestly

[1] The difficulties connected with the title of the Apology are discussed in vol. i. No. 1 of the Cambridge "Texts and Studies": 'The Apology of Aristides on behalf of the Christians.' From a Syriac MS. preserved on Mount Sinai. Edited, with an introduction and translation, by J. Rendal Harris, M.A., &c.; with an Appendix containing the main portion of the original Greek text, by J. Armitage Robinson, B.D. [now Canon of Westminster]. Second edition, Cambridge University Press, 1893.

and soberly, as the Lord their God commanded them: every morning and at all hours on account of the goodness of God toward them, they praise and laud Him: and over their food and over their drink they render Him thanks." (The shortened Greek text on p. 111 gives this: "They carefully guard His commandments, living holily and justly, as the Lord God commanded them, giving thanks, εὐχαριστοῦντες αὐτῷ, every hour in every meat and drink and the other good things.") "And if any righteous person of their number passes away from the world they rejoice and give thanks to God, and they follow his body, as if he was moving from one place to another: and when a child is born to any one of them, they praise God, and if again it chance to die in its infancy, they praise God mightily as for one who has passed through the world without sins. And if again they see that one of their number has died in his iniquity or in his sins, over this one they weep bitterly and sigh, as over one who is about to go to punishment" (the Greek of this latter portion is not extant), pp. 49, 50. The apologist further remarks, "And they labour to become righteous, as those that expect to see their Messiah and receive from Him the promises made to them with great glory. But their sayings and their ordinances, O King, and the glory of their service, and the expectation of their recompense of reward, according to the doings of each one of them, which they expect in another world, thou art able to know from their writings" (p. 50). Aristides maintains that "the world stands by reason of the intercession of Christians. But the rest of the peoples are deceived and deceivers. . . ." The Christians "pity them as men who are destitute of knowledge;

and in their behalf they offer up prayers that they may turn from their error" (p. 51).

The ancient Homily known as Clement's 'Second Epistle.'

The ancient Homily long erroneously described as the 'Second Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians' was probably a portion of a sermon preached in Corinth by an unknown writer, possibly prior to A.D. 200, though Harnack would assign it to the end of the third century. It contains one passage which may be cited here, namely, that in chap. xiv.: "Wherefore, brethren, if we do the will of God our Father, we shall be of the first Church, which is spiritual, which was created before the sun and moon; but if we do not the will of the Lord, we shall be of the Scripture which saith, 'My house was made a den of robbers.' So therefore let us choose rather to be of the Church of life, that we may be saved. And I do not think that you are ignorant that the living Church is the body of Christ? . . . [We omit here the obscure passage concerning the male and female.] And the Books of the Apostles plainly declare that the Church existeth not now for the first time, but hath been from the beginning [*ἄνωθεν*, so Bishop Lightfoot renders it; but the word may also be rendered locally, "from above"]: for she was spiritual, as even our Jesus was, but (He) was manifested in the last days that He might save us: but the Church being spiritual was manifested in the flesh of Christ, thereby showing us that, if any of us guard her in the flesh and defile her not, he shall receive her again in the Holy Spirit: for this flesh is the counterpart and copy (*ἀντίτυπον*) of the Spirit. No man therefore, when he hath defiled the copy (*τὸ ἀντίτυπον*), shall receive the original for his portion. . . . Guard the flesh, that you may partake of the Spirit.

The living Church the body of Christ.

But if we say that the flesh is the Church and the spirit is Christ, then he who hath insulted the flesh [by wanton conduct] has insulted also the Church. Such a one shall not partake of the Spirit, which is Christ. So excellent is the life and immortality which this flesh can receive as its portion, if the Holy Spirit be joined to it. No man can declare or tell those things which the Lord hath prepared for His elect."

The Homily, though the fragments in existence are of considerable length, contains no reference whatever to either of the sacraments, and the only reference it contains to Church government is that in chap. xvii., where the preacher exhorts the people: "Let us not think to give heed and believe now only, while we are admonished by the presbyters, but likewise when we have departed home."

The 'Shepherd of Hermas.'

It is noteworthy that the 'Shepherd of Hermas' (ascribed by some to the close of the first or the beginning of the second century, and by others to a later date) likewise contains no reference to the Lord's Supper, although it teaches extreme doctrine concerning baptism, and speaks of the administration of that ordinance after death ('Sim.,' ix. 16).[1] The information on points of Church government contained in Hermas will be alluded to later (see p. 114).

The 'Didachè; or, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,'

[1] This idea of baptism having been in some cases administered after death recurs elsewhere. It underlies the Vision of Perpetua (in her 'Passio,' vii., viii.), and lingered long in legend. St Patrick is said in the 'Tripartite Life' to have raised a heathen from the dead, baptised him, and sent him back again to his grave.—Whitley Stokes' 'Tripartite Life of St Patrick' vol. i. p. 123.

The 'Didachè; or, the Teaching of the Apostles.'

has been already alluded to in the opening of this essay. It should have perhaps stood earlier in order of citation, but it is impossible to decide strictly on such points. Its contribution to the knowledge of the Eucharist question is most important, and is contained in chaps. ix. and x., and in the early part of chap. xiv. The major portion of these must here be cited.

Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Chap. ix. "Concerning the Eucharist, give thanks thus—First, concerning the cup: We thank Thee, our Father, for the holy Vine of David Thy servant [the Vine is probably Messiah, comp. Berachoth., 57*a*], which Thou hast made known to us by Thy Servant Jesus [so we translate *τοῦ παιδός σου* in all places, because the reference is to Isaiah liii. The Revised Version rightly translates the same expression thus in the two passages Acts iii. 13-26, iv. 27-30]. To Thee be the glory for ever! But, concerning the broken bread (*τοῦ κλάσματος*): We thank Thee, our Father, for the life and the knowledge which Thou hast made known to us through Thy Servant Jesus. To Thee be the glory for ever. As this broken bread (*τὸ κλάσμα*) was once scattered [in grains] upon the mountains [comp. Psalm lxxii. 16], and when gathered together became one [loaf], so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom. For Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. But let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist but such as have been baptised in the name of the Lord; for concerning this the Lord said: 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs.'"

Chap. x. "But after being filled thus give thanks: We

thank Thee, Holy Father, for Thy holy name which Thou hast tabernacled [*κατεσκήνωσας*, comp. *ἐσκηνωσεν*, John i. 14] in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Thy Servant; to Thee be the glory for ever! Thou, Master Almighty (*δέσποτα*), didst create all things for Thy name's sake, and food and drink hast Thou given to men for enjoyment, that they may give thanks (*εὐχαριστήσωσιν*) to Thee; but to us Thou hast graciously given (*ἐχαρίσω*) spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Thy Servant. Before all we give thanks to Thee because Thou art mighty! To Thee be the glory for ever! Remember, Lord, Thy Church, to deliver her from every evil, and to perfect her in Thy love. And gather her together from the four winds, her that is sanctified, into Thy kingdom, which Thou hast prepared for her; for Thine is the power and glory for ever! Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David! If any one is holy, let him come; if any one is not, let him repent. Maran atha [*Our Lord is coming*], Amen."

The final thanksgiving after the partaking.

Such were the stated formulas before and after the Eucharist was distributed. Immediately after the above is added: "But suffer ye the prophets to give thanks (*εὐχαριστεῖν*) as they desire." That is, "the prophets" then in the Church were not to be bound to use those liturgical forms.

In chap. xiv. the following directions are given for ordinary church services: "But on each Lord's day (*κυριακὴν*) of the Lord, when assembled together, break bread and give thanks, after you have confessed your transgressions in

The ordinary Lord's day service.

order that our sacrifice [ἡ θυσία ἡμῶν, MS., but Bryennius edits ὑμῶν] may be pure. But let none that hath strife with his comrade come together with you until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice (ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν) be not defiled. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord, 'In every place and time bring me a clean sacrifice; because I am a great king, saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations'" (Mal. i. 11, 14).

The omission of Christ's "words of consecration."

The first and most important feature of the early Liturgy, or liturgical directions contained in the Didachè, is the complete absence of any command to employ in the celebration of the Eucharist the words of "consecration" made use of at the original institution of the Lord's Supper. There can, therefore, have been no idea at that time of any "miracle" or "change" in the bread and wine brought about by the solemn pronunciation of those words.

Similar omissions in the Nestorian Liturgy. Article in the 'Church Times.'

This point is especially noteworthy in face of the remarkable fact recently come to light, that among the Assyrian or Nestorian Christians, in their public liturgy, possibly the oldest in existence, these words of consecration have been also omitted for centuries. The 'Church Times,' February 2, 1894, in a long article signed "F. F. I.," thus comments on that important fact:[1]—

"This liturgy is certainly older than the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), and, as I have already said, is free from heretical error. But it has, as is pretty generally known, one glaring, and, indeed, fatal defect,—the words of

[1] We quote the article in the 'Church Times' as given in an important little book, 'The Eucharist, the Central Act of Faith and Worship.' By an ex-Priest. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. 1895.

Institution—or what are commonly known throughout the West as the words of Consecration—are entirely lacking. It appears to be all but capable of demonstration that originally this was not so, though how they dropped out it is impossible to conjecture. One theory which seems very probable on the whole is that they were said always from memory by the celebrant, and not committed to writing, perhaps from a sense of reverence.[1] However this may have been originally, the result in later centuries has been disastrous, the tradition of their recital having been lost, and Syrian priests having become accustomed to recite the liturgy without them. The Archbishop of Canterbury's mission has done good service in restoring them to their true position in the carefully revised edition of the liturgy which issued from its press three years ago."

Egyptian Liturgy.

Moreover, in Sarapion's Prayer-Book, edited by Bishop John Wordsworth (S.P.C.K.) from an eleventh-century MS. in the Monastery of Mount Athos, the words of our Lord,

[1] It is somewhat interesting to compare this theory of the writer of the article with a similar theory broached in Rev. E. W. Sergeant's essay on "Catholic Worship and the Book of Common Prayer," in the series of essays entitled 'The Lord's Day and the Holy Eucharist,' edited by R. Linklater, D.D. London: Longmans, 1892. The latter writes, p. 123: "It is sometimes urged that our Reformers, with a rational dislike to a rabbinical minuteness of direction, trusted to the priest to continue unbidden such of the old reverent practices as the nature of the sacrament required. It is a generous line of defence, and perhaps a true one," &c. It is passing strange, however, for Mr Sergeant to write thus, with the full account of the reasons for the omission of the ceremonies he refers to set forth in the section of the preface to the Book of Common Prayer entitled "Of Ceremonies, why some be Abolished, and some Retained." All those ceremonies which are not "retained" in the Common Prayer were plainly intended to be regarded as "abolished." It is strange that any persons can be beguiled by such transparent sophistry.

though recited in the service, form no part of the Egyptian prayer of consecration. Sarapion was Bishop in Egypt about A.D. 356. The Egyptian retention of the present participles of the original Greek shows that the bread and wine were supposed to symbolise Christ as in the act of dying.

The conclusion drawn in the 'Church Times' article queried.

In face of such facts and the Liturgy set forth in the 'Didachè,' the probability is that the omission points to an original feature in Liturgies used in the most ancient times, when the wonder-working effect of those words of consecration was not universally believed in.

The Church symbolised in the bread and wine.

It will have been noticed that in the 'Didachè' the bread and wine are not specially pointed out as symbols of the body and blood of Christ, but rather as symbolising generally "the spiritual food and drink and eternal life" communicated through Jesus Christ in the character of God's "Servant" (Isaiah liii.) But, while that is the case, in "the broken bread" there is pointed out first the Church scattered on the mountains (the single grains of corn), and then the Church united into one body as portrayed in the "one loaf." That symbolisation is found in St Paul's Epistle (1 Cor. x. 17). Cyprian (martyred A.D. 258) makes several allusions to it. In his 'Epist. to Magnus' (Epist. lxxv., or Oxford ed. lxix.) he observes "that when the Lord calls bread which is combined by the union of many grains His body, He indicates one people whom He bore as being united; and when He calls the wine which is pressed from many grapes and clusters, and collected together, His blood, He also signifies one flock linked together by the mingling of a united multitude." So at greater length in his 'Epistle to Cæcilius' (Epist. lxii.,

Cyprian's testimony on these points.

Oxford ed. lxiii.), writing against the employment of simple water in place of wine, which was then common in many places, and urging the use of the mixed chalice, Cyprian maintains that by the water is understood the people, and by the wine Christ and His blood, and that both must be united together.[1] That Father nowhere supposes the mixed chalice to represent the water and blood which proceeded from Christ's body when on the cross.[2]

The 'Didachè' and Church government.

It is impossible within our limits to notice completely the light cast on the early government of the Church by the discovery of the 'Didachè.' Suffice it here to observe that it has afforded distinct proof that *apostle* was a name generally given to itinerating missionaries. The 'Didachè' sets forth certain tests to enable the Church to distinguish between true and false apostles (chap. xi.) The 'Didachè' has thus thrown important side-lights on several passages of the New Testament which were supposed to present difficulties. It explains how Barnabas was termed an apostle (Acts xiv. 14; comp. also 2 Cor. viii. 23), and shows what is meant by "all the apostles" in 1 Cor. xv. 7, although "the twelve" had been previously spoken of in ver. 5 of that chapter. The warnings of 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14 and of Rev. ii. 2 gain in fulness of meaning. The 'Didachè'

[1] The same idea is found in other Fathers, and is alluded to in detail in the celebrated book of the Monk of Corbey Abbey, Bertram or Retram, 'De Corpore et Sanguine Domini,' cap. lxxiii.-lxxv.

[2] It may also be noted that reference is made to this symbolism even in the Catechism of the Council of Trent. For in discussing the Eucharist in Pars ii. cap. iv. § xviii., it is observed that the water signifies the Church. In § xix., *quarto*, of same chapter, allusion is made to the numerous clusters of the vine and to the many grains of wheat out of which the bread is made which is used in the Eucharist.

speaks of apostles, prophets, and teachers, of bishops and deacons; but the latter two classes were chosen by or out of the communities themselves (chap. xvi. 1). Hermas, who was himself probably "a prophet," speaks of presbyters (Vis., i. 4), of apostles, bishops, teachers, and deacons (Vis., iii. 5; Sim., ix. 15), of apostles and teachers (Sim., ix. 16, 25), of bishops (Sim., ix. 27), of prophets and deacons (Sim., ix. 15), of true and false prophets (Mand., xi., comp. Did., xi. and xiii.) That the Church organisation sprang out of the arrangements of the Synagogue, and not from the Temple arrangements, becomes plain at every step taken in investigating the matter. The very places where the Christians met for divine service, not only in Palestine (where the name lingered on long), but even in Gentile lands, were long known as "synagogues." See James ii. 2; Ignatius' Epistle to Polycarp, iv., and Bishop Lightfoot's note on that passage; Hermas, 'Mand.,' xi.[1] Even the office of the *Diaconate*, although not its *name*, seems to have been derived from the Synagogue officials, styled by the Jews the "receivers of alms" (גַּבַּאֵי צְדָקָה). Schürer's great 'History of the Jewish People' may be consulted as to their duties, which were similar to those of "the Seven" as set forth in Acts vi. Bishop Lightfoot is correct in maintaining that the chazzan of the synagogue was not the prototype of the Christian "deacon."

The light cast by Hermas upon the same subject.

The Church and the Synagogue.

With the fact in view that the officers of the Church even in apostolic days were not alike at all times (see 1 Cor.

[1] See the chapter on "The Church and the Synagogue" in Mr Chase's important work on 'The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church' (1891) in the Cambridge "Texts and Studies."

xii. 28-30, Eph. iv. 11, 12), it is plain that the statements of these Apostolic Fathers effectually demolish those Levitical pretensions as to bishops, priests, and deacons, set forth indeed in the apocryphal 'Apostolical Constitutions' on the lines drawn by Cyprian, and which ultimately hardened into the apostolical succession theories of mediæval and modern days. The death-blow to Levitical pretensions.

We can only give a brief glance at the writings of Justin Martyr, the date of whose birth was probably somewhere about A.D. 114. The date of his martyrdom is very uncertain. His accounts of the Eucharist have been so frequently quoted that it is perhaps permissible to abbreviate them. In his 'First Apology' Justin does not use the term "bishop"; he speaks of "the president of the brethren" (ὁ προεστὼς τῶν ἀδελφῶν, chap. lxv.), or simply "the president" (chap. lxvii., three times). Alongside of "the president" "the deacons" are spoken of as distributing "the bread and the wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced" (chap. lxvi.) Concerning the express form of that "thanksgiving" nothing is said in chap. lxv., although the words spoken by our Lord at the original institution are quoted in the chapter following (chap. lxvi.) But the practice set forth in the 'Didachè' (already quoted, pp. 108-110) leads us to look for more precise statements than were formerly deemed necessary. Justin mentions, however, that the people were wont to respond to this and other thanksgivings and prayers with audible Amens (chaps. lxv. and lxvii.) The "food" distributed among the brethren was also termed "the Eucharist" (chap. lxvi.) Justin Martyr on the Eucharist.

Bread and wine, or bread and water.

Harnack, in a remarkable article on 'Brod und Wasser: Die Eucharistischen Elemente bei Justin,' in Band vii. Heft 2 of his 'Texte und Untersuchungen' (1891), has shown that there are weighty reasons leading to the conclusion that Justin's text has been tampered with, and that his practice was to administer the Lord's Supper with bread and water. We shall not discuss that question, though the conclusion of chap. lxvi. looks that way, because it remarks: "Which the wicked devils have in imitation commanded to be done in the mysteries of Mithras; for that bread and a cup of water after certain incantations are placed in the mystic rites, you either know or can learn."

Not common food or drink.

Justin, however, observes that "not as common bread and common drink (*πόμα*) do we receive these, but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh (*σαρκοποιηθείς*) by the word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayers of His Word, from which our body and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is both the flesh and blood of that incarnate (*σαρκοποιηθέντος*) Jesus" (chap. lxvi.)

Christian sacrifices: metaphorical.

That expression seems to have been understood mystically. In the 'Dialogue with Trypho,' Justin, arguing with that Jew, having quoted the passage in Mal. i. 10-12, comments as follows: "The Lord then speaks of us the Gentiles, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, that is, the bread of the Eucharist, and likewise the cup of the Eucharist, saying that we glorify His name and that you pollute it" (chap. xli.) But later in the same Dialogue (chap. cxvii.), commenting again on the same text, and notic-

ing Trypho's remark that God calls prayers sacrifices, Justin says: "Now that prayers and giving of thanks (*εὐχαριστίαι*), when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God, I also admit. For such alone Christians have undertaken to offer, and in the remembrance (*ἐπ' ἀναμνήσει*) effected by their solid (lit. *dry*, *ξηρᾶς*) and liquid food, by which the suffering of the Son of God which He endured is brought to mind." This extension of the thought, symbolised solemnly in the Eucharist, to all the solid and liquid food partaken of by Christians, is remarkable.

The only sacrifices which a Christian offers.

Solids and liquids.

Of the Eucharist Justin speaks in an earlier passage, in which he strangely misinterprets Isaiah xxxiii. 13-19, in these terms: "Now it is evident that in this prophecy [reference is made] to the bread which our Christ gave us to do for a remembrance of His becoming incarnate (*σεσωματοποιῆσθαι*) for those who believe in Him, for whom also He became subject to suffering (*παθητός*); and which He gave us to drink with giving of thanks in remembrance of His own blood" (chap. lxx.)

The Eucharist simply a remembrance.

We could wish to speak somewhat of the beautiful 'Epistle to Diognetus,' the authorship of which is still unknown, but which most likely is pre-Justinian. But we must forbear. It should be noted, however, that it does not speak of the Eucharist. The expression "mysteries," which occurs in that epistle, can be shown, by a collation of passages, to be used only in the New Testament sense of that word as meaning the divine revelations made in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The concluding words of that epistle may be quoted where the writer says: "Bearing this

The 'Epistle to Diognetus.'

tree [of true knowledge], and displaying its fruit, thou shalt always gather in those things which are desired by God, which the serpent cannot reach, and to which deception does not approach, . . . and salvation is manifested, and the apostles [the term being here probably used in the wide sense] are filled with understanding, and the passover of the Lord advances, and the choirs are gathered together, and are arranged in proper order, and the Word rejoices in teaching the saints, by whom the Father is glorified; to whom be the glory for ever. Amen."

The 'Octavius' of Minutius Felix.

To complete the survey of the Christian writings down to A.D. 200, we must notice the 'Octavius' of Minutius Felix, which, however objectionable in its description of the torments of the lost, is on the whole a most beautiful composition. Its date may be fixed between A.D. 166 and 198. There is no reference in it to the Eucharist, but there is an able defence of Christians against the charges then freely made of the vilest idolatry, of child-murder and Thyestian banquets, against the objections of the heathen drawn from the fact that Christians had "no altars, no temples, no acknowledged images" (chap. x.) "Crosses," he says in chap. xxix., "moreover, we neither worship nor wish for." His descriptions of the true God are grand, his allusions to the future inheritance of the saints inspiring. The exposure of heathenism is scathing. "He who cultivates innocence supplicates God; he who cultivates justice makes offerings to God; he who abstains from fraudulent practices propitiates God; he who snatches a man from danger slaughters the most acceptable victim. These are our sacrifices, these are our rites of God's worship; thus, among

us, he who is most just is he who is most religious" (chap. xxxii.) There is no sacrifice of the Mass spoken of, no Christian priesthood as standing between God and man.

Our survey would not be complete without a short notice of the works of Irenæus, the great Bishop of Lyons, who was born some time between A.D. 115 and 130, and died between A.D. 190 and A.D. 202. As Irenæus speaks of having conversed with Polycarp and Papias, who were disciples of St John, his testimony is of great value in the chain of Christian evidence. Pothinus, who preceded him in the bishopric of Lyons, died as a martyr, and Jerome incidentally notices that Irenæus met also the same glorious end.

Irenæus' work, 'Against Heresies.'

His great work extant is that 'Against Heresies,' which, as a whole, is only preserved in the Latin version, though a considerable part is also extant in the original Greek. That work was mainly directed against the Gnostics, and it is the great storehouse from whence our information is derived with regard to their peculiar heresies.

The jugglery of Marcus.

On the question of the Eucharist it is difficult to condense Irenæus' opinions, because the context often requires to be given at considerable length in order to understand his references. In treating of Marcus, whom Irenæus speaks of as one who might be "a forerunner (*πρόδρομος*) of Antichrist" (book i., chap. xiii. 1, 2), and whose skill in conjury was used to the furtherance of heretical views, he says that, "pretending to perform the Eucharist (*εὐχαριστεῖν*) with cups of mingled wine (*ποτήρια οἴνῳ κεκραμένα*), and protracting to a great length the word of invocation (*τῆς ἐπικλήσεως*), he makes them to appear purple and red, in

order that Grace (ἡ Χάρις), one of these [emanations] which are superior to all things, might seem to drop her blood into that cup by means of his invocation, . . . in order that the Grace set forth by this magician might flow into them [those that partake of it]. And, again, handing to the women mixed drinking-cups (ἐκπώματα κεκραμένα), he orders them while he was standing by to make the Eucharist [εὐχαριστεῖν—either simply to repeat the benediction, or technically to consecrate the mixed cup], and when this is done, he himself bringing forward a much larger cup than that which the deluded woman consecrated (ηὐχαρίστησε), and having poured out from the smaller one that which was consecrated (ηὐχαριστημένον) into that which was arranged by him, repeating at the same time thus: 'May she who is superior to all things, the unknowable and unspeakable Grace, fill thy inner man, and multiply in thee the knowledge of Her, sowing the grain of mustard-seed in the good ground.' And saying some such things, and maddening the wretched woman (τὴν ταλαίπωρον), he appears a wonder-worker, having filled the large cup out of the smaller cup so as even to be overflowed by it."

It is unnecessary to comment on such an imitation and profanation of that which took place at the true Christian feast.

Irenæus on the words, "This is My body."

The Lord's Supper itself Irenæus speaks of in a later book (book iv., chap. xvii. 5). In opposition to the Gnostic teaching, which treated matter in the world as evil, and despised creation, Irenæus argues that God commanded men to offer Him the first-fruits of His own creatures, not because He was in want of those first-fruits, but that men

might not be unthankful. Therefore, even Christ Himself "received that which is bread of the creation (*qui ex creatura panis*), and gave thanks, saying, This is my body. And the cup, similarly, which is of that creation (*qui est ex ea creatura*) to which we belong, He confessed was His blood, and taught the new oblation of the New Testament, which (oblation) the Church receiving from the apostles, offers to God throughout the whole world, to Him who gives us as the means of subsistence the first-fruits of His own gifts in the New Testament (Mal. i. 10, 11), most clearly signifying by these [verses of Malachi] that the former people [the Jews] shall cease to offer to God, but that in every place sacrifice shall be offered to Him, and that pure. But His name shall be glorified among the Gentiles."

Irenæus on incense and sacrifice.

Irenæus further argues that the name of Christ is the name also of the Father, for He is the Father's likeness, and ends thus the next section (6): "Since, therefore, the name of the Son belongs to the Father (*proprium Patris*), and since in the omnipotent God the Church makes offerings through Jesus Christ, He says well on both these grounds: 'And in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure sacrifice.' But John in the Apocalypse declares [Rev. v. 8] that the incense is 'the prayers of the saints.'"

Figurative, not literal, sacrifices.

It appears plain to us that Irenæus here speaks of a figurative sacrifice, and not of a literal one. He took, indeed, a step in advance in speaking so much about the oblations and sacrifices of the Church, using the Old Testament language. But the long discussion concerning "sacrifices and oblations" contained in chap. xviii. shows

clearly enough what his meaning is. He is all through contending against those who maintained "that the things around us originated from apostasy, ignorance, and passion," and he asserts that those heretics who maintained such views were insulting God by their travesty of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist a protest against Gnosticism.

It is important to notice how Irenæus again and again cites the Eucharist as a proof of the falsehood of the Gnostic opinions, and maintains in doing so that our earthly bodies are themselves nourished by the food of the Eucharist [compare further book v., chap. ii. 2], which "increases the substance of our bodies." "But we offer to Him his own, carefully announcing communion and unity and confessing the raising of flesh and spirit.[1] For as the bread which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God (*τὴν ἔκκλησιν τοῦ θεοῦ*), is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two things, an earthly and a heavenly, so also our bodies, having partaken of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of a resurrection for ever" (book iv., chap. xviii. 5).

The sacrifice and the creature.

He goes on immediately to affirm: "Now we make offering to Him, not as though He stood in need of it, but rendering thanks for His gift [*donationi* appears to be the true reading, in accordance with chap. xviii. 1 [2]], and thus sanctifying the creature (*creaturam*). For even as God

[1] The Greek is *προσφέρομεν δὲ αὐτῷ τὰ ἴδια, ἐμμελῶς κοινωνίαν καὶ ἕνωσιν ἀπαγγέλοντες, [καὶ ὁμολογοῦντες] σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος [ἔγερσιν]*. But the words in brackets are rejected as interpolations by Grabe and Harvey, although maintained to be genuine by Massuet in Migne's 'Patrologia.'

[2] But Massuet in Migne and others read *dominationi*, which is also edited by Grabe.

does not need our possessions, so we do need to offer something to God. . . ."

There is not a word in all this of "a propitiatory sacrifice," nor of an offering of Christ's real body and blood actually held forth in the hands of the priest. For Irenæus closes the chapter: "Thus it is, therefore, also His will that we too should offer a gift at the altar, frequently, without intermission. There is therefore an altar in the heavens (for there our prayers and oblations are directed), and a temple, as St John in the Apocalypse says, 'And the temple of God was opened,' and a tabernacle, for he says, 'Behold the tabernacle of God in which He will dwell with men.'" The altar is in heaven.

It may be well to quote the following passages from book iv., chap. xxxiii. 2, lest it should be said that we have only presented one side. Irenæus is there arguing against Marcion, and against his idea that there are "two gods separated from one another by an infinite distance." He asks: "How could the Lord, with any justice, if He belonged to another father, have acknowledged the bread to be His body, while He took it from that creation to which we belong, and affirmed the mixed cup (*temperamentum calicis*) to be His blood? And why did He acknowledge Himself to be the Son of man if He had not gone through that birth which belongs to a human being?" Christ's body made from the creation.

The next passage is a longer one: "But vain in every respect are they that despise the entire dispensation of God, and deny the salvation of the flesh, and despise its regeneration, saying that it is not capable of incorruption. But if this indeed do not attain salvation, then neither did the Lord redeem us with His blood, nor is the cup of the "The salvation of the flesh."

Eucharist the communion of His blood, nor the bread which we break the communion of His body. For blood does not exist, unless from veins and flesh, and whatsoever is according to the substance of man such as the Word of God was actually made (*qua vere factum est Verbum Dei*). By His own blood He redeemed us, as also His apostle declares, 'In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins. And, as we are His members, we are also nourished by means of the creation (διὰ τῆς κτίσεως), and He Himself gives the creation (κτίσιν) to us, for He causes His sun to rise, and sends rain when He wills. He has acknowledged the cup, which is of the creation (ἀπὸ τῆς κτίσεως), as His own blood, from which He bedews our blood; and the bread, also of the creation (ἀπὸ της κτίσεως), He has established as His own body, from which He gives increase to our bodies."

The symbols of the Eucharist disprove Gnosticism.

"When, therefore, the mingled cup (τὸ κεκραμένον ποτήριον) and that which is made bread (καὶ ὁ γεγονως ἀρτος) receives the word of God [the benediction] and becomes the Eucharist, the body of Christ is made, from which things the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, which is life eternal, which (flesh) is nourished by the body and blood of the Lord, and is made a member of Him? even as the blessed St Paul declares in his Epistle to the Ephesians [Eph. v. 20], &c." —Book v., chap. ii. §§ 2, 3.

The Eucharist exhibits the flesh as capable of eternal life.

It is easy to see from such extracts that Irenæus was not indisposed to make use of mystical language; for though he speaks decidedly about the abrogation of the ceremonial law,

The mystical language of Irenæus.

he was not unwilling to make a figurative use of its phraseology, and to apply that phraseology to matters connected with the Church of Christ. St Paul frequently speaks of Christ being in the believer (Rom. viii. 9-11; 2 Cor. vi. 16, xiii. 5; Gal. iv. 19, &c.) That truth in a mystical sense is most precious. But it is not a literal fact. A fatal blunder was indeed committed when the Church began to term the bread and wine "mysteries," explaining the "secret" only to the "initiated." But, as Bishop Fitzgerald has shown,[1] the "secret" was that the bread and wine were only figuratively so termed.

Irenæus explains his language as mystical.

Among the fragments from lost works of Irenæus we must give two short extracts, which tend to explain this point. The following is cited by Œcumenius upon 1 Pet. iii.: "Greeks having arrested slaves belonging to Christian catechumens, having used force (torture) in order to learn from them, no doubt, some secret thing about Christians, those slaves not having anything to say which would gratify those who were torturing them, beyond what they heard of their masters, (stated) that the Divine Communion (*τὴν Θείαν μετάληψιν*) was the blood and body of Christ; they (the slaves), imagining that it was really blood and flesh, told this to those who examined them. But they (the torturers) having assumed immediately that this was performed by Christians, sent word of this to the other Greeks, and they compelled by tortures the martyrs Sanctus and Blandina to confess it. To those men Blandina replied admirably in those words: 'How should those persons endure such (accusations) who for the sake of the practice

[1] Lect. on Eccl. Hist., i. 183.

(of piety) did not avail themselves even of the flesh that was permitted?'"

Thyestian banquets.

The paragraph casts light upon the charge of "Thyestian banquets," so frequently alleged against the Christians. Blandina's reply showed that she had no conception of eating literally the flesh and blood of the Redeemer.

There has also been preserved another important fragment in Greek, which states as follows:—

The Christian sacrifices are not carnal, but spiritual, and therefore pure.

"Those who have understood the secondary ordinances of the apostles (*ταῖς δευτέραις τῶν ἀποστόλων διατάξεσι*) know that the Lord, according to Malachi the prophet, established a new offering (*προσφοράν*) in the new covenant [Mal. i. 11], as John says in the Apocalypse, 'The incense offerings (*τὰ θυμιάματα*) are the prayers of the saints' [Rev. v. 8]; and Paul exhorts us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service' [Rom. xii. 1]; and again, 'Let us offer up the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of the lips' [Heb. xiii. 15]. These sacrifices, indeed, are not according to the Law, whose handwriting the Lord took away from the midst, having blotted it out [Col. ii. 14], but according to the spirit, for in spirit and in truth it is necessary to worship God [John iv. 24]. Whereupon the sacrifice of the Eucharist (*ἡ προσφορὰ τῆς εὐχαριστίας*) is not carnal (*σαρκική*), but spiritual, and in this (is) pure. For we offer unto God the bread and the cup of blessing, giving thanks (*εὐχαριστοῦντες*) to Him, because He commanded the earth to bring forth those fruits for our nourishment, and then, having fulfilled the offering (*τὴν προσφοράν*), we call upon the Holy Spirit that He may exhibit this sacrifice

(*τὴν θυσίαν ταύτην*), both the bread the body of Christ and the cup the blood of Christ, that they who receive those antitypes (*τούτων τῶν ἀντιτύπων*) may obtain the remission of sins and everlasting life. They, therefore, that perform these offerings in remembrance of the Lord, do not fall in with the dogmas of the Jews, but performing the service (*λειτουργοῦντες*) spiritually shall be called sons of wisdom."

"The sacrifice of the Eucharist."

While in these words of Irenæus we have to regret the first occurrence of that unscriptural phrase, "the sacrifice of the Eucharist," which wrought such mischief in the Church of God in later times, there is nothing whatever in the expressions fairly understood which really gives countenance to the vast superstructure of superstition reared upon such phraseology in later ages.

"Figurative language is figurative."

The words of the Roman Catholic Bishops in England, used in reference to the language used by Anglican divines concerning "sacrifice and priesthood," may be suitably quoted here: "The human mind delights in tracing analogies, and it has been the custom in all ages to call the heart's self-surrender, with its offerings of praise and prayer and service, by the name of sacrifice, because these things are of the nature of gifts which involve cost to self. Scripture itself uses this language, and we are far, therefore, from objecting to it. On the contrary, we employ it very generally ourselves. It is important, however, to bear in mind that figurative language is figurative, and not to confound resemblances with the realities."[1]

[1] A Vindication of the Bull Apostolicæ Curæ. A Letter on Anglican Orders. By the Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster. Longmans, Green, & Co., 1898. See p. 77.

"Apostolical succession."

We would have wished to have quoted the passages in which Irenæus refers to the so-called "apostolical succession," to which phrase we maintain he did not attach the objectionable meaning assigned by the Tractarian divines; but we have already exceeded our limits, and must forbear.

Contemporaries of Irenæus.

We need scarcely remind our readers that although Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria and others were partly contemporaries of Irenæus, their main works were published after A.D. 200, and consequently they do not fairly come within the range of the first two centuries.

The 'Supplicatio' of Athenagoras.

The 'Supplicatio' ascribed to Athenagoras, the philosopher of Athens, belongs probably to the same time. We cannot discuss Harnack's very interesting remarks on that document and its date in vol. i. of his 'Texte und Uebersetzungen.' But although it alludes to the abominable calumnies referred to by Minutius Felix, there is also to be found in that interesting 'Supplicatio' or 'Apology' no reference whatever to a Eucharistic sacrifice.

The conclusion of the survey.

The final conclusion at which we have arrived at the close of our essay is that up to the commencement of the third century there is no real trace of sacerdotalism, and no belief in that awful dogma which was afterwards introduced into the Christian Church under the appellation of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

By the Rev. R. E. BARTLETT, M.A.

"I BELIEVE in the holy Catholic Church"—"I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church." It is a grand, an inspiring profession, and ought to stir the hearts of Christians with loyalty and pride, such as a soldier feels for the army to which his allegiance is pledged, and under whose banner he is ready to fight. And yet, when we come to look at the actual facts, is there much to be proud of? Is there much to thrill our hearts with the consciousness of belonging to a great invincible host, united in loyal devotion to the Captain of our salvation, going on under His command conquering and to conquer? It is easy to sing in procession— Introductory.

"Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God:
. . . . .
We are not divided,
All one body we."

But when we have put off our ecclesiastical vestments and gone out into the world, is it such a soul-stirring

spectacle that we see? Do we recognise the one body moving like a mighty army to victory over the powers of evil? or is it not rather a spectacle of division and weakness, of Christians turning their arms against each other, and wasting in internecine strife the strength that should be given to the establishment of the Kingdom of God?

Question proposed.

What, then, do we mean, to what do we commit ourselves, when we profess our belief in the holy Catholic Church? If once we could arrive at a definition of this term, we should not be far from a settlement of many perplexing questions and of many controversies which have vexed Christendom.

It is possible to lay too great stress on the etymological meaning of words. Words slowly and imperceptibly change their meaning: they have their history; they do not mean to us what they meant when they first came into circulation. Still the history of a word is sometimes as instructive as the history of an institution; and it may be useful to inquire what was the original connotation of the word Church, and of its epithet Catholic.

"Church": origin of term.

The Greek word ἐκκλησία was used for the general assembly of the citizens of a free state, summoned by the herald to meet on public business. It was not a select or representative body, but it was a meeting of all the citizens of full age, such as may still be seen in some cantons of Switzerland. In the Septuagint it was used for the congregation of the children of Israel, or the congregation of the Lord; hence it was natural that in the writings of the New Testament it should be transferred to the whole congregation of the spiritual Israel, the temple built upon

the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, of which Jesus Christ Himself was the chief corner-stone. The word Church is only twice recorded to have been used by our Lord, in each case in St Matthew's narrative: nor can we be sure of the exact term which He used, since the oral tradition of His teaching embodied by St Matthew would naturally adopt the word which apostolic usage had rendered familiar; but in the Epistles of St Paul, and especially in the Epistle to the Ephesians, it is used familiarly as the name of the Christian society, and it is noteworthy that it is always spoken of in connexion with God and Christ: "The Church of the living God." "He gave Him [Christ] to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body." It is also used in the plural number, but the division is always local—the churches of Galatia, the seven churches of Asia, &c.

"Catholic": meaning of term.

The distinction between the universal Church, embracing all who named the name of Christ, and "the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus," naturally led to the adoption of a distinctive term; and the great all-embracing Christian society came to be distinguished as[1] the Church throughout all the world—the Catholic Church. The name "Catholic Church" is first found in the Epistle of St Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, where, in exhorting them to Church order, he says, "Where the bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church." The two uses of the word Church are well exemplified in the epistle from the church of Smyrna describing the martyrdom of Polycarp: "The

[1] ἡ καθόλου ἐκκλησία—ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

Church of God which sojourneth in Smyrna to the Church of God sojourning in Philomelium, and to all the other parishes[1] of the holy Catholic Church in every place, mercy, peace, and love from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied."

The Catholic Church then meant originally "*the whole congregation of Christian people scattered throughout the world*," as opposed to the smaller congregations of Christians dwelling in separate cities or meeting in a particular house. But the word soon assumed another signification. Even in apostolic times it was necessary to warn the Christian disciples lest their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, and to put them on their guard against false apostles, deceitful workers, preaching another gospel than that which they had received. But when the Christian tradition came in contact with the philosophical school of Alexandria, immediately an impulse was given to the intellectual and speculative side of Christianity, which led to an undue exaltation of knowledge (*gnosis*), and to speculations about the nature of the Godhead and of Christ, which soon came into more or less direct antagonism with the received Christian doctrine. And thus the question was raised, How can false teaching be distinguished from the true? How may simple Christians know what is to be received and what rejected? The answer was given as St Paul gave it in his day: "Keep what you have received. Beware of false teachers, who put before you not the uni-

[1] παροικίαις. I have translated this word literally for want of a better word. "Places where they sojourn" would probably express it best. It is the origin of our word parish, though at first it meant rather a diocese.

versal belief of the Church throughout the world, but their own private notions." Here we have the distinction between heresy—a man's own private choice—and the belief of the Church universal. And thus the Catholic faith came to be contrasted with private and unauthorised dogmas, and the Catholic Church assumed the position of custodian of the faith once for all delivered to the saints as against the corruptions and innovations of private men.

Here we have the beginning of the tendency to make the word Catholic a term not of comprehension but of exclusion—a tendency no doubt inevitable, but still likely to lead to further exclusion, and to narrow gradually the comprehensiveness of the term. Nor was it long before the same tendency made itself felt in respect of discipline. In the African churches a schism arose touching the treatment of those who in time of persecution had fallen away, and of those who had delivered up the sacred books to the heathen authorities. Was it possible that such offenders could on repentance be readmitted to Christian communion? Had they not crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame? Must not the Church be holy and pure? To this St Augustine opposed the teaching of our Lord in the parable of the Tares, "Let both grow together until the harvest." The Church has, and must always have, imperfect, even unworthy, members; we must judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come. But this did not satisfy the fanatical party: if the Church was not pure, their cry was, "Come out of her and be separate"; and so there arose a separate organisation, with its own bishops, renouncing communion with the more merciful society

Tendency to restriction.

which was willing to receive back penitent offenders. And so again arose the question, How are we to know the true Church? To which voice are we to listen? And the answer was, To the voice of the Church universal. The separatists based their unity on a single point of discipline; the Catholics based theirs on the proportion of faith. And thus, as the Catholic faith is opposed to the private fancies and the private interpretations of men, so the Catholic Church is opposed to the separatist principle, which says, We differ in opinion as to some point of doctrine or discipline, therefore we cannot worship God together, nor belong to the same body of Christians. It is true, as we said just now, that under the name of Catholicity there has been a tendency to exclusiveness rather than comprehension; but still upon the whole the principle enunciated by Vincentius of Lerins (A.D. 433), that the Catholic faith is that which has been held always, everywhere, and by all ("*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*"), has been a standing protest against narrowing the terms of Christian communion; an assertion—though perhaps not so intended by its author—that temporary or local or individual opinions are not to be made conditions of membership in the universal Church.

Separation of Eastern and Western Churches.

The separation of the Eastern and Western Churches, begun by the foundation of Constantinople in the fourth century, and widened by the addition of the "Filioque" clause to the Nicene Creed and by the controversy on the worship of images, marks a critical moment in the history of the Church. To this time, with whatever different degrees of submission to the Papal See, the whole Church had

been in communion with the Church of Rome. After this we have the spectacle of two great Churches, each claiming to be Catholic, but the one accepting and the other rejecting the growing claims of universal supremacy on the part of the Roman pontiff, and the additions to the creed of the undivided Church decreed by successive Western Councils. Here, then, to all outward appearances was a breach, complete and irreconcilable, of Catholic unity; the efforts of popes and patriarchs to bring about a reunion led only to a temporary and superficial agreement:—

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining—
> Like cliffs that had been rent asunder;
> A dreary sea now flows between."

It might seem as though the theory of one Catholic and Apostolic Church had received its death-blow; and yet may it not have been that in the providence of God the separation has resulted in a wider conception of Catholic truth and unity? The unchanging East, the home of theological conservatism and of abstract thought, and the restless, changeful West — for Dean Stanley has shown that the apparently stationary papal Church, even in its least progressive phases, is really changeful and innovating in comparison with the Eastern Church—these are two opposite poles, either of which without the other would be an imperfect and one-sided representation of the truth.

The Reformation.

But the breach between the Eastern and Western Churches was, after all, less fatal to the theory of organic unity than the convulsion which shattered the Western Church in the sixteenth century, which we call the Reformation. That before the Reformation the Church

was undermined and honeycombed with abuses; that Rome was the fountainhead of all manner of corruption; that good men were everywhere beginning to despair of any real reform in a system of which the diseases and the remedies seemed to them alike intolerable, — this is admitted even by writers to whom in its results the Reformation seems unjustifiable. But when it came to the parting of the ways, when it became clear that men must choose between their love of truth and their allegiance to the Papacy, we cannot wonder that the less daring spirits shrank back appalled. For it was no light thing thus to break with the past. It was no light thing deliberately to disobey and to set at naught one who claimed to be, and whom they had themselves acknowledged to be, the Vicar of Christ upon earth. To men like Erasmus and More and Colet the breach of the continuity of the Church's life involved in seeking reform otherwise than through a General Council, and in co-operation with the Pope, would be a remedy worse than the disease. But events proved too strong for the moderate party, and when Luther burned the papal bull at Wittenberg it was clear that the Reformation meant not a mere correction of abuses, but a breach with Rome.

On the Continent and in Britain.

It was no doubt possible, while casting off the papal supremacy, to preserve intact the organisation of the Church. Bishops had existed in early times with no acknowledgment of the authority of the Bishop of Rome —nay, such bishops existed still in the Eastern Church; why not, therefore, preserve the episcopal succession unchanged? This course was actually pursued in England,

where the royal authority was strong enough to coerce the bishops; it was attempted in Prussia, and carried out in Sweden; but in the end the more pronounced form which the Reformation assumed on the Continent, and the greater unwillingness on the part of the bishops to accept the Reformed doctrines, made it impossible to preserve the old scheme of Church government, and Protestantism in Germany, France, and Denmark assumed a Presbyterian form. Nor did the preservation of the ancient organisation suffice to conciliate the Pope: for a time, indeed, he took no active measures against the English Church, but the mission of Cardinal Pole in the reign of Mary to accept the submission of England, and to reconcile her to the Catholic Church, showed unmistakably the attitude of Rome towards the Reformation; and if for a moment the Pope seemed not indisposed to acknowledge the English Prayer-book in return for an act of submission to his authority, yet when Pius V. excommunicated Elizabeth and absolved her subjects from their allegiance, it was clear that the supreme authority of the Western Church regarded the Church of England as a schismatical Communion.

Review of the position.

Here, then, we pause for a moment to survey the situation. We see the Roman Church claiming to be the only true Church, arrogating to herself exclusively the title of Catholic, hurling excommunication against all who refused to acknowledge her authority. On the other hand, we see the ancient Churches of the East scrupulously preserving their episcopal succession, representing more faithfully than the Western Communions the traditions of the undivided Church, yet repudiating the papal claims as a modern usurpa-

tion. We see also the reformed Church of England maintaining her ancient organisation, claiming in her creeds to belong to the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, yet denounced by the patriarchal see of the West as heretical and schismatical, her bishops and priests ignored as mere usurping laymen, her orders treated as null and void, her sacraments as invalid. And, further, we see, as the result of the Reformation on the Continent and in Scotland, national Churches, Presbyterian in their organisation, hardly claiming the title of Catholic, and retaining but faint traces of the ancient forms of worship. And before long we see this type of Protestantism reproducing itself in England. Gradually alongside of the national Church there sprang up Communions alien in worship and organisation, yet claiming to be on her side as against the still formidable power of Rome, weak and insignificant at first, yet manifesting a vigorous life, until the so-called Free Churches have become an integral part of English Christianity, and have contributed elements to the social life of the nation which it could ill have lacked. And it is to be noted that the Church of England, scorned and excommunicated by the Roman see, naturally ranged herself with the Protestant Churches of the Continent as maintaining the principles of the Reformation. With the English Nonconformists her relations were never altogether cordial, although when there was any question of Roman aggression, neither party forgot that the other was Protestant; but, on the whole, throughout the West the dividing-line was that between Roman and Protestant, not that between Episcopal and non-Episcopal.

In the face of all this ecclesiastical division and confusion, what construction are we to put upon the words of the Creed, "I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church"? In what consists the unity of the Church? In what its Catholicity? And in what its Apostolicity? Here is the difficult question which we must be prepared to meet, if our recitation of the Nicene Creed is not to be charged with unreality. Is there, in fact, one Catholic and Apostolic Church? And if so, what are its characteristics and what its boundaries? Unity, Catholicity, Apostolicity.

It may tend to clearness if we try to ascertain what are the theories of Catholicity held by these different Christian bodies. It is characteristic of the fixedness and immobility of the Eastern Church that her writers declare that Christ established five, and only five, patriarchates in His Church, corresponding to the five senses—Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch—thus leaving no provision for the extension of the Church, or for the discovery of new lands. They deny any sort of primacy of the Roman Patriarch; indeed they hold that the Roman primacy was transferred to the New Rome when Constantinople became the seat of empire. The Tridentine decree, on the other hand, unequivocally declares that the holy Roman Church is "omnium ecclesiarum mater et magistra"—the mother and mistress of all Churches; and the bull "Unam sanctam" sums up briefly the papal theory of the Church: "We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary for salvation that every human creature should obey the Roman Pontiff." The Church of England, while professing her belief in the Holy Theories of Catholicity: 1. Episcopal.

Catholic Church, gives as her definition of the Church, "The Visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." Although this is a somewhat loose definition, it seems certain that the compilers of the Articles had no idea of excluding from the Church those Reformed Churches on the Continent which lacked episcopal government. The English and Continental Reformers had received so much mutual help and support from each other, that it is in the highest degree improbable that either would regard the other as outside the Catholic pale. The moderation and good sense of the Church of England on this subject may be well summed up in the words of Dr Isaac Barrow in his commentary on the Creed under the Article of the Holy Catholic Church: "In relation to which Society, these are the duties which we here profess ourselves obliged to, and in effect promise to observe: 1. That we do, and will persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, delivered by our Saviour and His apostles, attested unto by the general consent of all Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion deviating from apostolical doctrine. 2. That we are obliged to a hearty charity and good affection to all good Christians. 3. That we are bound to communicate with all good Christians, and all Societies sincerely professing faith, charity, and obedience to our Lord; so as to join with them, as occasion shall be, in all offices of piety; to maintain good correspondence and concord with them"; and in the temperate summing up of Bishop Harold Browne in his

commentary on the 19th Article: "The English Church has been content to give her decision as to the right mode of ordaining, ministering sacraments, and exercising discipline, without expressing an opinion on the degree of defectiveness in such matters, which would cause other communions to cease from being Churches of Christ." [1]

2. Non-Episcopal.

The view of the non-Episcopal Churches is more difficult to state definitely. It is clear that they would not make Episcopacy of the essence of Catholicity, since by doing so they would be pronouncing sentence against themselves. The Confession of Augsburg, representing German Protestantism, says (Art. vii.): "For the true unity of the Church it suffices to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, or rites instituted by men, should be everywhere alike." The Westminster Confession distinguishes between the visible and the invisible Church: "The Catholick or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. The visible Church, which is also catholick or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." And it adds a characteristic note of seventeenth-century Protestantism:

[1] Exposition of the XXXIX. Articles, p. 467.

"There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God."

But a more recent, and a very striking and valuable, testimony to the view of the non-Episcopal Churches is to be found in the new 'Evangelical Free Church Catechism,' lately published by special committees of Congregationalists, Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists, Primitive Methodists, Presbyterians, Methodist New Connexion, and Bible Christians, with the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes for their chairman and convener. In this really admirable catechism we find the following questions and answers:—

33. *Q.* What is the Holy Catholic Church?

A. It is that Holy Society of believers in Christ Jesus which He founded, of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit; so that, though made up of many communions, organised in various modes, and scattered throughout the world, it is yet One in Him.

35. *Q.* What is the essential mark of a true branch of the Catholic Church?

A. The essential mark of a true branch of the Catholic Church is the presence of Christ, through His indwelling Spirit, manifested in holy life and fellowship.

This may no doubt be accepted as the authoritative pronouncement of the English non-Episcopal communions; and it marks a very great and welcome advance in the direction of a wider conception of the social aspect of Christianity than one has been accustomed to associate with English Nonconformity. That Mr Price Hughes

should speak of himself as "a Catholic Churchman" is a sign of the times as unexpected as it is cheering.

We may now go on to discuss the question, What do we English Churchmen mean when we profess to believe "one Catholic and Apostolic Church"?

Catholicity in the English Church.

There are three leading explanations of the term, which we may discuss in order:—

First view.

1. A large number, probably a majority of the clergy, of the Church of England, would define the Catholic Church to mean those Christians who, professing the Catholic faith, are governed by bishops possessing the apostolic succession, and would embrace under their definition the Eastern Churches, including the Greek, Russian, Coptic, Abyssinian, and other Churches; and the Western Churches, including those subject to the Roman obedience, the Church of England with the colonial Churches, the Church of Ireland, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America, and the various mission Churches established by them in foreign lands—for instance, in China, Japan, Polynesia, &c. Whether the Scandinavian Churches should be included would depend upon the question whether they make and can establish a claim to the apostolic succession. This definition would, of course, exclude the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and the Continent, the Nonconformist Churches of England, and also the great non-Episcopal communions of the United States and the British colonies, which largely outnumber the Episcopal Churches in those lands. It is a theory which commends itself by a certain symmetry and compactness, and by offering what our forefathers would have called "a short

and easy way with Dissenters"; but it has two great difficulties to meet. In the first place, while it links us in one communion with the Roman, the Greek, and the Coptic Churches, it cuts us off by an impassable barrier from the most intelligent and progressive and active Christian communities, which have everything but Episcopacy in common with ourselves; while it binds us to the religion of the past, it severs us from the religion of the future; while it holds out the hand of fellowship to the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Alexandria, it turns its back upon the Wesleyans and the Presbyterians and the French and German Protestants. And in the second place, the Roman Church sternly, and even contemptuously, refuses to accept any such common ground of catholicity. "We alone are Catholics," it says; "you are schismatics. Your episcopal succession is a delusion; your so-called priests are laymen: until you acknowledge the decrees of the Council of Trent and submit to the Roman pontiff, we have nothing to say to you." To use a little parable which I ventured to put forth once before, a Roman and an Anglican priest and a Presbyterian minister are shipwrecked together on a desolate island. The Anglican congratulates the Roman that the Catholics are in a majority of two to one. "Not at all," replies the Roman, "I am the only Catholic; you Protestants are in a majority; I have nothing to do with you: get you gone." It certainly seems difficult to maintain a theory of catholicity which, by the majority of those whom it would embrace, is absolutely and unconditionally repudiated.

Second view.

2. Another theory which was widely held three centuries

ago, but which would find but few adherents now, is that of the invisible Church. This view, expressed in the quotation given above from the Westminster Confession, regards the body of professing Christians as the visible Church, while the true and holy Church, consisting of the elect whom God has chosen to sanctification, is a select body known only to Him. Obviously this theory avoids certain difficulties. The glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish; the body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; the holy temple in the Lord, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets—where are we to look for this? Can we identify this magnificent ideal of spotless holiness with any, even the purest, of the existing Church organisations? And yet God's purpose cannot have failed; and therefore this holy Church, this spotless spouse of Christ, must exist, though we cannot see it; it is the great multitude which no man can number, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; it is the blessed company of all faithful people.

Third view.

3. This doctrine of the invisible Church was an inadequate attempt to express a great truth. It is true that the holy Catholic Church is invisible—not because it consists of men and women known only to God, but because it is an ideal existing in its perfection only in the divine mind, an ideal which we cannot hope to see perfectly realised, but which, nevertheless, we must never cease to aim at and to strive after. It is the principle set forth by Plato in the ninth book of the 'Republic,' where he says, speaking of the ideal state, that "in heaven there is laid up a pattern of

it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order. But whether such a one exists, or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other." All great things, all noble institutions, are but strivings, more or less blind and imperfect, after ideals. It was an ideal and not a concrete or visible condition of things that Tennyson had in his mind when he wrote—

> "Of old sat freedom on the heights,
> The thunders breaking at her feet:
> Above her shook the starry lights:
> She heard the torrents meet.
> . . . . . .
> Then stept she down through town and field
> To mingle with the human race,
> And part by part to men reveal'd
> The fulness of her face."

And if we are ever to believe heartily and without reservation in the holy Catholic Church, it can only be by resolutely looking above the actual Church with its imperfections, its controversies, its corruptions, its persecutions, till by faith we behold the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; it can only be by lifting up our hearts unto the Lord, and contemplating in His divine humanity the ideal Church which is His body.

The Catholic Church an ideal.

If we do not bear this in mind, we shall be in danger of making our profession of belief in the Church a very poor and meagre thing. To say I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church, and to mean by these great words merely I profess myself a loyal member of the Church of England,

or I accept the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles, or even I acknowledge the divine authority of Episcopacy, seems hardly a worthy interpretation. The statements of the Creed are not true—it would be paradoxical to maintain that they are true—of any one existing Church, or of collective Christendom; they are true only of that ideal Church which exists in the divine mind, but which must be the aspiration and the hope of every Christian. The holy Catholic Church—that is the ideal; "in the visible Church the evil are ever mingled with the good"—that is the actual. And in the same way, with regard to the unity of the Church, it is surely neither necessary nor desirable, on the one hand, to shut our eyes to the fact that Christendom is split into a great number of competing bodies; or, on the other hand, to assert in the teeth of facts that the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican are the one Catholic Church, and the rest are nowhere. The Church is one, and it is holy—not in present fact, but in its ideal perfection; the statement of the Creed keeps before us the perfect heavenly ideal, not the imperfect earthly reality; and it would be a poor religion of which the theory was not higher than the fact. It is not in the things that are seen that our faith can find its fulfilment: we must live by ideals, or our faith will become stunted and feeble.

Theories of unity.

But the Church is described not only as Catholic, but also as *One;* and here at any rate, it may be said, we need something more than an Ideal: we require a visible unity, such, for instance, as we have in the State. This is what has given to the Church of Rome its strange attractiveness: it offers to men perplexed and distracted by "our

unhappy divisions" a real tangible and visible unity; and undoubtedly, if organic unity is one of the notes of the Church, the great organisation which has its visible head on the Vatican, and which does not hesitate to proclaim itself the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, seems to offer the only visible unity attainable. It is a very unreal unity which bases itself on an Episcopacy of which the majority flouts and disowns the minority; and we may be very sure that Rome will never even consider any terms of peace short of absolute and unconditional submission. But is there no other possible basis of unity? At the time of the Reformation, when the Protestant Churches separated themselves from or were rejected by the Church of Rome, it was clear enough that outward unity could be restored only by reconciliation with Rome on her own terms; and accordingly the Churches of the Reformation looked for unity among themselves, not in ecclesiastical organisation, which indeed was impossible, on account of their separate national character, but in harmony of doctrine. This accounts for the fact that the Reformation era was so fertile in long and elaborate statements of theological belief, such as the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church, the Augsburg Confession, the Helvetic Confession, and in the next century the Westminster Confession. But it was not reasonable to expect that a movement whose principle was freedom should issue in identity of belief. It is true that the Reformers agreed in appealing to Scripture as the supreme and infallible authority; but Scripture must be interpreted, and uniformity of interpretation needed infallible interpreters. It was not long before the Reformers diverged from one

another on questions of the Sacraments, of Predestination and Freewill, of the relation of Faith and Works, and the like; and the contention waxed almost as hot between them as that between the Reformers and the advocates of Rome. One cannot wonder that in the variations of the Protestant Churches Bossuet found a tempting argument against the Reformation. It would be easy to meet him with the reply, that in the Roman Church variations have always existed, and that such apparent unity as is to be found has been secured only by the repressive action of authority. But it is best to admit frankly that the freedom of thought which Protestants claim cannot but produce variations of opinion, and that until men's minds are all cast in the same mould, or they are persuaded to subject their understanding to one infallible authority, *uniformity of belief cannot be made the basis of Catholic unity.*

The true centre of unity.

It is strange that Christians should have sought for their principle of unity in Church government or in dogmatic belief, and should have overlooked the unity which Christ Himself sets before us. He seems to regard the Christian society not as a highly organised polity, not as a hierarchy claiming universal allegiance, but rather as a flock united together by their sense of a common danger and by their trust in their Shepherd. "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them: he fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd, and I know Mine own,

and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock, one Shepherd. . . . My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." In the striking words of Mr Llewelyn Davies,[1] "You can hardly by any effort think of this flock of Christ as ruling its own members with absolute authority; you cannot think of the sheep setting up for themselves and seeing it to be their duty to follow with unreserved submission a sheep of their own number. The figure of a Divine Queen, receiving the homage of her subjects and ruling them with despotic authority, will not suit the flock of Christ."

Essence of the Church Catholic.

We seem, then, to have arrived at this conclusion, that the essence of the Church Catholic consists, not in its possessing a certain form of ecclesiastical government, nor yet in its holding a certain expression of dogmatic belief, but in its relation to Christ, involving a certain relation of the members to each other. That organisation and division of officers is as necessary to the Church as to any other human society is obvious; that to promote divisions among Christians is, in fact, scattering the sheep and facilitating the wolf's work cannot be denied; but the *true test of catholicity* is, not obedience to the Roman pontiff, not Episcopal government, not acceptance of the Catholic faith, but allegiance to Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. If the Roman and High Anglican theory is true, that Christ before His Ascension gave commandment to the Apostles as

[1] Davies, Spiritual Apprehension, p. 179.

to the organisation of His Church, and that by His direction they instituted the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons, then it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the gates of Hades have prevailed against His Church. But if we go back to the earliest and fundamental charter of the Church, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them"; and if we keep in mind those other words of His, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me," we shall learn that the Christian fellowship depends, not on institutions or forms of government however venerable, but in union with Christ and in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Not to be found in organisation.

The historical researches of recent years have thrown much new light on the constitution of the Christian Church. In Bishop Lightfoot's memorable Essay on the Christian Ministry, we find the results of his investigations into the Christian *Origines* set forth with luminous clearness. "The Kingdom of Christ, not being a kingdom of this world, is not limited by the restrictions which fetter other societies, political or religious. It is in the fullest sense free, comprehensive, universal. It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all, it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. To Him immediately he is responsible, and from Him directly he obtains pardon and draws strength." And he adds that though for convenience special times and places for worship and special officers for conducting

worship and imparting instruction must of necessity be appointed, yet "the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people are never regarded as transferred or even delegated to these officers. They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the Church; but the sacerdotal title is never once conferred on them. The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood." It is true that the Bishop in subsequent editions and in other publications explained that although he held that Episcopacy had been developed gradually according to the needs of the Church, and not all at once, still he believed that a localised episcopate was traceable in the later years of the apostolic age, that it is more especially connected with the name of St John, and that in the early years of the second century the episcopate was widely spread and had taken firm root, more especially in Asia Minor and in Syria. But though this is so, yet a localised episcopate gradually developed, even with the sanction of apostolic names and under apostolic direction, is something very far short of a divine ordinance binding for ever upon the universal Church. Episcopacy is like monarchy: it is a venerable and historic form of government; it links us with the distant past; where it exists, no wise man would wish to abolish it; so long as Episcopacy and monarchy can adapt themselves to a democratic form of society, they will hold their own; but neither Episcopacy nor monarchy has any more exclusive divine right than any other form of government in Church or State; and to refuse to recognise a Church because it is not episcopal, or a State because it is

not monarchical, would be that fatal kind of blindness, a refusal to recognise accomplished facts.

Christ the Head of the Church.

Our conception of the Church, then, will be faulty and inadequate if we do not begin from Christ. To quote once more the words of Mr Llewelyn Davies: "Christ, contemplated as we know Him, has one ideal Church, so to say, attached to Him. It makes a great difference whether we are looking about for a separate divine Church on the earth, or are letting Christ in heaven suggest and bring home to us the Church which is His body. Christ evidently sought to hinder His followers from thinking of Him by Himself. He desired to be associated by them, on the one hand with the Father, on the other hand with mankind. It was a main part of the purpose of His coming that He should attach men to Himself, and Himself to men. We know Him most truly when we contemplate Him as the Son of the Father and the Head of His body. And the body, thus regarded as completing Christ, becomes easily to our minds ideal, spiritual, prophetic: a vision of what should be and is to be, not made by our imaginations, but discerned in the will of God by our faith."

The ideal illuminates the actual.

But, it may be said, this contemplation of the ideal Church will make men less inclined to accept and make the best of their position in the actual Church; the Anglican Church will lose its interest for them if their minds are engrossed with the heavenly ideal. On the contrary, the most devoted and loyal and active servants of the concrete Church on earth will be those whose hearts are set upon the greatness and the perfectness of the ideal

Church in the divine mind, those for whom the Anglican or any other actual Church serves "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Christian worship will be elevated and dignified when it is seen to be a part of the heavenly worship; Christian beneficence will be ennobled by being connected with the love and goodness of God; even the details of church organisation will gain fresh interest and meaning when we submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Christian effort will be stimulated and encouraged by the thought that we are workers together with God in carrying out and perfecting His divine plan for the redemption of humanity.

The Oxford movement.

The subject which has been under consideration in this essay is one of great practical importance at the present time. For during the last sixty years there has been a movement in the Church of England the object of which has been to give greater prominence to what is commonly called the Catholic element in the Church. This movement has been represented as supplementing the Evangelical Revival which preceded it. The object of that revival was to deepen and stimulate personal religion. Its effect upon the individual soul can hardly be better expressed than in the words of Cardinal Newman, who speaks of the influence of the Evangelical teaching of his early days in "making me rest in the thought of two and two only

supreme and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator." The personal relation to God, the personal interest in Christ, the personal sanctification and renewal by the Holy Spirit,—this seemed in effect the be-all and the end-all of the Evangelical system. Critics were apt to say that the idea of the Church as a living body and of the sacraments as signs and means of union in that body had been too much ignored in the teaching of the Evangelicals. And therefore when Newman began the publication of the 'Tracts for the Times,' insisting upon the existence of a visible Church, emphasising the importance of the sacraments, and bringing into prominence the fact that the Anglican Church claims to be something more than a mere help to individual edification, it came to the minds of devout Christians as something like a restored truth, and taught them for the first time that their profession of belief in the holy Catholic Church had a meaning which they had not before recognised. They began to see that membership in the Anglican Church, which hitherto they had accepted as a decent conformity to the established religion, separating them from the Church of Rome on the one hand and from the Nonconformists on the other, and thus isolating them in a little national fold from Christendom at large, did really bring them into some kind of connexion with the Church universal, and that the Christian life was intended to be not an individual but a corporate life. The Oxford movement was undoubtedly a gain to the Church of England; but it was not all gain. It produced a sense of corporate life which has infused fresh vigour into the whole system; it has stirred into

animation a Church which was in danger of dying of dulness and decorum; but in its recoil from the somewhat dreary Protestantism of the eighteenth century it has too often been tempted to minimise the significance of the Reformation, and to find in Rome the type to be as far as possible imitated. At first, indeed, the accusations of Romanising freely brought against the so-called Puseyites were unjust and ignorant. Dr Pusey himself probably never for a moment felt a temptation to join the Roman Communion; Cardinal Newman till within a few years of his submission wrote strongly, almost fiercely, against Rome; and the ritual of both these distinguished leaders would now be pronounced by many a newly ordained deacon to be quite uncatholic. But from a very early point in the history of the movement there were men, some of them of hardly less intellectual eminence than the two just mentioned, to whom the attractions of Rome proved irresistible. The names of Ward, Faber, Oakeley, Badeley, Henry and Isaac Wilberforce, Manning, will serve to show that the earlier converts were for the most part men of piety and learning, who would not take so grave a step "unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly." On the other hand, among the many who never wavered in their allegiance to the English Church, there are names such as Samuel Wilberforce, Keble, Liddon, Church, of which any Communion might be justly proud.

The crisis in the Church, 1899.

In writing this essay, I have endeavoured to keep out of my mind any thought of the so-called crisis in the Church through which we are now (1899) passing. The subject is one which is best discussed without reference

to passing controversies. At the same time, it is impossible not to remember that the name Catholic has of late years been usurped by a section of the Church of England, implying thereby that its adherents alone are Catholic, and denying the Catholicity of all other members of the Church. It is impossible to protest too strongly against such an arrogant claim. To narrow down the grand and comprehensive term Catholic to be the badge of a party is a monstrous piece of presumption, reminding one of the old Scottish Cameronian goodwife, who being asked if she really thought that she and her husband were the only two Christians left in Scotland, replied quietly, "I'm no' that sure o' Jock." We hear of "the Catholic party" in the Church, and we find that by this designation is meant the narrowest, the most reactionary section of the Anglican Communion. There are, of course, among those who claim to be members of the "Catholic" party, men of large culture, of true Christian charity, and of saintly life and wide influence for good—men who are faithful to the Church of England, though their conception of it may not be ours; but the tendency of the party generally is to minimise or misrepresent the effect of the Reformation, and to describe the difference between ourselves and Rome as unimportant compared with the difference between Anglicanism and Protestantism. And unhappily the party is largely led by its rank and file, by men like the newly appointed young vicar of whom we have heard, who announced to his astonished churchwardens on his arrival, "You are going to have everything Roman except the Pope." But why, one asks, except the Pope? If we are to have all

"Catholic practices" — the Mass without communicants, Reservation of the Sacrament, the office of Benediction, the Festival of Corpus Christi, candles burning before the image of the Virgin, the Communion service interpolated with passages from the Missal, and the Consecration Prayer said in an inaudible voice—in the name of common-sense why except the Pope? Submit to him, and the whole Roman Communion will admit that you are "Catholic"; refuse to obey him, and your "Catholicity" rests upon your own assertion. The truth is, that the loose way in which people have been accustomed to speak of the adherents of the Roman Church as "Catholics" has produced a kind of unformulated impression that Rome is at any rate the centre and type of Catholicity, and that the nearer we approach to her the more sure we may feel of being within the charmed Catholic circle. It is time for us to shake off this delusion, and to learn that Rome has in truth departed more widely than any Church from true Catholicity. It is time to learn that if the much-quoted phrase, "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus," is to be applied to the Church of modern days, it must be applied to Christendom at large, and that the Churches of the Reformation have a right to demand that their voice should be regarded as well as the voice of the fourth century—

> "For we are Ancients of the earth,
> And in the morning of the times."

And here comes in that great principle of Development which Cardinal Newman used as a weapon in defence of the Church of his adoption, but which is capable of being

used with no less effect in behalf of that liberalism which it was the first object of his life to oppose. For as he himself said, "Here below to live is to change; and to be perfect is to have changed often"; and again, "In such an idea as Christianity, developments cannot but be, and these surely divine, because it is divine." He himself indeed was careful to restrict development within certain definite limits of Church authority; but his favourite motto, "Securus judicat orbis terrarum," is surely susceptible of a wider meaning than was assigned to it either by St Augustine or by the Cardinal himself. The Church is the interpreter of Scripture; but not the Church of any one age, nor the Church speaking in a general Council, nor the Pope as the infallible Vicar of Christ: the voice of the Church is like the British Constitution, not a written document, not reduced to formulas; it is like the wind, of which thou hearest the sound, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; it has to be gathered, painfully and with difficulty, from the indications of the thought and of the experience of successive generations of men. And therefore to endeavour to precipitate once for all the thought and belief of the Church into an unchangeable formula which shall for all time be the expression of the Catholic faith is nothing less than unbelief in the power of the eternal Spirit. True,[1] the Catholic faith is unchanged and unchangeable; it is unchanged, just as the tree is unchanged which has put forth the vital energy which makes it what it is, and has grown from a young sapling into a stately oak. It is

[1] I have here borrowed a few sentences from my Bampton Lectures, 1888, on "The Letter and the Spirit."

unchangeable, and yet we are sure that as the ages roll by, and as social conditions change, and

"The thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns,"

it will assume fresh proportions, and will put forth fresh shoots, and will imperceptibly adapt itself to its new environment. Of all heresies, the greatest and the most deadly is that which would limit God's revelation of Himself to one age or to one type of character or to one system of thought. In Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. They are hidden that we may search them out, that we may expect ever fresh light and fresh knowledge to break forth from Him. "I am verily persuaded," said the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers as they embarked in the Mayflower, "that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Word." "It is not incredible," says Bishop Butler, "that a book which has been so long in the possession of mankind should contain many truths as yet undiscovered." "O send forth Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me," should be the prayer, as of each Christian man, so too of the Church at large.

Benefits of true belief in Catholic Church.

A true conception of the Catholic Church would lift us out of many of the ruts in which we are now helplessly labouring. As long as each Church, each denomination, each party, claims the exclusive possession of the truth, we shall go on spending our strength in fruitless contests amongst ourselves, in vain jangling about vain things that cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain,—instead of labouring to lay at least the foundations of that temple made without hands, in which the divine Presence shall be

once more manifested. But if once we have grasped the idea that all the institutions and all the ritual and all the confessions of faith which now limit our view are but adumbrations more or less imperfect of the things in the heavens, of the ideal Church and the house not made with hands, we shall learn to see things in their true proportion, and we shall be able to rise into a higher and purer atmosphere, where the Spirit of God shall no longer be adulterated with the breath of human passion and controversy. Too often we identify the kingdom of God with the imperfect human organisations in which we have made our first acquaintance with the Christian faith; or we idealise the early Church, and think that the history of Christendom has been one of continuous deterioration from the purity of its childhood; or we cherish our Catholicity or our Protestantism, and forget that the main thing is to be disciples of Christ. But—

> "Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day and cease to be;
> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Conclusion.

One, holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. The words sound almost like irony. One—and the Church is rent by fissures old and new; and if a man is asked his religion he says he is a Churchman, or a Congregationalist, or a Baptist, or a Wesleyan, and never thinks of the one name that is worth being called by, that of Christian. Holy — and though bishoprics are no longer bought and sold, nor heretics burnt at the stake, yet worldliness and intolerance are not unknown in the Church, and men care more for the triumph

of their party or the extension of their religious denomination than for the Kingdom of Heaven. Catholic—and we have Eastern Christianity, and Western Christianity, and Anglican Christianity, and Scottish Christianity; and the Christianity of Christ is—where? Apostolic—and if the Apostles came back to this world, would they recognise anywhere the representatives and successors of the churches which they founded? And yet amidst all that is unworthy, all that is corrupt, all that is petty and narrow in modern religion, the eye of faith can discern, dimly it may be, yet with growing clearness, the faint and shadowy outlines of the Church which is Christ's body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Amidst all the perplexities and controversies and schisms of the Church here on earth, our duty is to rise above the things that are seen, and to see and hear the things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, to walk by faith and not by sight.

"Cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!
She reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'
She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer through the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed 'Mirage.'"

"God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world."

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

By the Rev. T. W. DRURY, M.A.

IN St Luke's account of primitive Christian worship, we can trace the origin not only of our communion service, but also of our daily prayers. His description of the common devotions of the early Christians is as follows: "Day by day continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home."[1] As devout Jews they attended the daily temple service, where the priests, as of old, offered the usual sacrifices and prayers, while in obedience to Jesus, whom they had come to believe in as the Christ, they held a specially Christian service by "breaking bread at home." Origin of our services.

This latter is clearly the origin of the celebration of Holy Communion, and the connection between the daily Jewish services and our own Morning and Evening Prayer is hardly less distinct.

From other passages in the Acts of the Apostles it is at least probable that from the first the temple services so in-

[1] So the R.V. renders κατ' οἶκον, Acts ii. 46.

fluenced the daily life that the Jewish hours of prayer were kept as regular hours of devotion. Thus in ii. 15 we read of "the third hour," in iii. 1 of "the ninth hour," and in x. 9 of "the sixth hour."[1] Passing to the end of the second century, Tertullian of Carthage speaks of these same hours as not only specially sacred, but as being so by apostolic sanction. He calls them *horas insigniores*, and again, *apostolicas*.[2] And when in the sixth century we find a fully developed system of Canonical Hours in the Western Church, the three central services are Tierce, Sext, and Nones,[3] which had clearly held their place from the very first days of Christianity.

On the services for these Canonical Hours, as we find them in the Sarum Breviary, our present Morning and Evening Services are founded. It is therefore a fair conclusion that our daily services are linked by a continuous chain to that temple attendance which is noted by St Luke, just as our Communion Office is connected, though by stronger ties, to the primitive "breaking of bread at home."

It would not be justifiable to press these analogies too far; but they certainly suggest that, as we shall find in the following age, the celebration of the Eucharist was of a most simple character, unmarked by anything of ritualistic display, and unconnected with the sacerdotal ministrations of the Jews. It is rather the lineal descendant of the home festival which formed part of the Paschal celebration, and

[1] These, the third, sixth, ninth, hours were the recognised Jewish hours of prayer. In the 'Didachè' we read of the Lord's Prayer, "Three times in the day pray ye so."

[2] Tert., de Jejuniis, cap. x.

[3] *I.e.*, the services of the third, sixth, and ninth hours.

which our Lord was pleased to take up and use as the prototype of His Holy Supper.

This view confirmed by subsequent New Testament notices.

The few references found in subsequent parts of the Acts and the Epistles confirm this view. At Troas [1] the celebration is described in terms which convey the idea of extreme simplicity. The allusions in 1st Corinthians [2] are such as make it impossible to believe that there was any approach to elaborate ritual, or that any extreme outward devotion was then practised: otherwise the rise in so short a time of such irreverence as the Apostle rebukes, would have been impossible. Doubtless such scandals as then occurred made a seemly order, such as our own, most desirable; but they also prove that the primitive and Scriptural idea of the holy rite involved nothing to justify the extravagant ideas which are now pressed as essential to a reverent performance of it.

Referred to in the 'Didachè; or, Teaching of the Apostles,' ch. 9, 10.

The account in the 'Didachè' is remarkable for its strongly marked tone of thanksgiving. From the very first the character of the service was such as to justify the name which shortly became so common—the Eucharist. Twice in this account the service, and indeed the elements themselves, are spoken of as the "Eucharistic Thanksgiving." "But as touching the Eucharistic thanksgiving,[3] give ye thanks thus." "But let no one eat or drink of your Eucharistic thanksgiving [4] but they that have been baptised into the name of the Lord." "But permit the prophets to offer thanksgiving [5] as much as they desire."

[1] Acts xx. 7-12. [2] 1 Cor. x., xi. [3] *περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐχαριστίας.*

[4] *ἀπὸ τῆς εὐχαριστίας ὑμῶν.* Cf. Justin, Apol., i. 66, *καὶ ἡ τροφὴ αὕτη καλεῖται παρ' ἡμῖν εὐχαριστία.*

[5] *εὐχαριστεῖν.*

The position assigned to "the prophets" is one of the evidences of the early date of this writing,[1] and the freedom that was allowed them shows that no settled form of service was as yet binding. The whole passage reflects a natural and simple celebration such as the New Testament suggests.

The account in Justin Martyr.

In Justin Martyr's First Apology (A.D. 140-150) we have an account of a Sunday service, which is unmistakably a celebration of the Eucharist. First there are the lessons from Apostles and Prophets, a sermon follows from the president (ὁ προεστώς), then comes "common prayer," apparently *ex tempore*,[2] to which the people respond, *Amen*. Then the reception of bread and mingled wine and water takes place, portions being sent by the deacons to those who are absent, after which an offertory, for orphans and others, closes the simple worship.

Two facts strike us as we picture this service. First, that we have here the framework of our own and all other Eucharistic Offices. Second, that we are still breathing the atmosphere of primitive simplicity. There is no reservation, but the portions are sent most naturally by the hands of the deacons. Water is mingled with the wine, but it is simply the custom of the country; not to have done so would have been thought a mark of excess. Moreover, the officiating minister is simply ὁ προεστώς, the president. We may be sure, however, that he was one of the presbyters (priests) of the Church, and we may note that in 1 Tim. v. 17 the words οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι occur.[3]

[1] It was written late in the first or early in the second century.

[2] ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ.

[3] Tertullian (de Coronâ, iii.) says, "Nec de aliorum manu *quam presidentium* sumimus."

The account given by Cyprian and Cyril.

An interesting piece of evidence comes next from Cyprian of Carthage (A.D. 250), and from Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 350). St Cyprian says, "It is for this cause that the priest before worship uses words of introduction, and puts the minds of the brethren in preparation, by saying, 'Lift up your hearts'; that while the people answer 'We lift them up unto the Lord,' they may be reminded that there is nothing for them to think of but the Lord."[1] It is evident that we have here a very early trace of certain *formulæ* of worship which are found in all extant liturgies, including our own. St Cyril goes further, and adds the words, "Let us give thanks to the Lord," "It is meet and right," thus leading up to the song of the Seraphim,—"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts."

Thus it is in the third and fourth centuries that we find the first references to definite formulæ of worship, which must, however, have arisen many years before, as they are commented on by writers in distant Churches as already recognised parts of the service. The old unrestrained freedom of the Prophet or the President, as mentioned in the 'Didachè' and in Justin Martyr, have now given place to what seems to be a fixed liturgy.

A change of view appears in the third century.

But by this time changes of far greater moment were creeping in. As early as the 'Didachè' (ch. 14), the word "sacrifice" is used of the service as a whole. Moreover, from the time of Justin Martyr[2] the names "oblation"

[1] Cyprian, de Orat., 20.

[2] The earlier references in Clement are not clear. Bishop Lightfoot regards the oblations there mentioned as general, not specially those offered at the Eucharist. Clem. Ep. to Cor., xl. Cf. Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 260.

and "sacrifice" were used of the gifts for God's service which were always offered at the Holy Communion, just as our own "alms and oblations" are now "presented and placed upon the holy table." These offerings included the bread and wine which were to be used for communion; but it is most important to note that there is no trace in these early days of their being offered *as consecrated*, or as representing the Lord's body and blood, but purely as gifts recognising God as the author of all our blessings, and to be used in His holy service. As time went on, from a part of the service being thus called an oblation or sacrifice,[1] the whole celebration came to be called by those names. None will deny that our thanksgivings are a sacrifice, and there is no reason why we should not regard all our offerings as in this sense a sacrifice, nor why we should exclude the elements of bread and wine; but we should carefully note that in following this early language we must regard the bread and wine as presented *in order to be consecrated*, and not as representing Christ's body and blood *after consecration*.

With St Cyprian came the change. He speaks of our Lord as offering "bread and wine, that is to say, His own body and blood," [2] and of offering Himself in this sacrament to God. Here is the germ of a great and grievous mistake, which has wrought incalculable harm. From this arose the habit of calling the elements after consecration a sacrifice, and of speaking of their being offered to God as the body and blood of Christ. At first it may be true that writers intended the word "sacrifice" to mean only the "memorial

[1] *προσφορά* and *θυσία*.

[2] Cyprian, Ep. 63.

of a sacrifice"; but, as we shall see later on, the distinction was too subtle for ordinary minds, and the introduction of a distinctly sacerdotal view of the priesthood at the same date, helped to produce the impression that after consecration there was in some sense an offering of Christ to God by the priest on behalf of the people. The same idea was strengthened by the supposed analogy between the three orders and the Levitical priesthood,—an analogy, as Bishop Lightfoot[1] has pointed out, which is without foundation. We date this serious change from the times of Cyprian, who, though a holy man and a great Churchman, was, according to the same writer, "the champion of undisguised sacerdotalism." It should cause no surprise that with this change of view there came in by degrees what were but the logical consequences, — extravagant language as to the holiness of the consecrated symbols, the payment of superstitious regard, and a ritual of dress and posture corresponding to that of the Jewish priest of old.

We have very imperfectly traced the origin and earlier development of this service. But enough has been said to enable us to recognise two features which marked the early celebrations of the Eucharist: they were (*a*) obedience, (*b*) simplicity.

Two marked features in these early celebrations: (*a*) obedience; (*b*) simplicity.

(*a*) *Obedience.*—Exact obedience to every detail in the Lord's last command seems to have been regarded as an essential condition of blessing. The words "Do this" were taken to refer to the whole transaction in all its detail, and what Christ did on the night of Institution, that His followers tried to do when He was gone. To quote the

[1] Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 261.

words of Dr Wace,[1] "We are bidden to do this whole series of actions in remembrance of Him—this whole series and nothing less—and if, in any ostensible obedience to the command, any of these actions are omitted, beginning with the blessing, and ending with the eating and drinking, the Lord's command is not really obeyed." That was the spirit of implicit obedience which moved the primitive Christians, and we may note in passing that it carries with it the condemnation of any such order as the refusal of the cup to any communicant.

(*b*) *Simplicity.*—These early accounts of the Lord's Supper reveal the absence of any attempt to add to the effect of the ordinance by practised postures, or elaborate ritual. Doubtless it was necessary, as time went on, to take precautions against the irreverence which connection with a common meal might occasion,[2] and to provide a fitting dignity and order for more public celebration. But beyond this, little was added in the first three centuries — the age when apostolic tradition was strongest and purest — to the simplicity of primitive custom. Thus St Cyprian says, "Cleave fast to the first beginning, hold fast the Lord's tradition: do that in the Lord's commemoration which He Himself did, He Himself commanded, and His apostles confirmed."[3]

We do not forget that the early liturgies, now extant,

[1] Report of Islington Conference, 1899, p. 19.

[2] *E.g.*, those named in 1 Cor. xi. This led to a severance of the celebration of the Eucharist from the Love Feast, and was in part the cause of the change of hour to the morning. Cf. Ante lucem convenire, Pliny, Epist., 97; Antelucanis cœtibus, Tert. de Corona, iii.

[3] Quoted in our Homily on Worthy Receiving of the Sacrament.

display a wealth of elaboration and complicated service very different to our own; but these liturgies, beautiful as they are in many of their petitions and doxologies, so that some of their main features have been incorporated into the worship of nearly all Christians, yet belong, as we now have them, to a later period, when much had been added to the simple primitive tradition which it seems probable that they contain. The universal use of the words of Institution, the constant witness to the noble burst of praise introduced by the cry, "Lift up your hearts," while pointing to an origin little short of apostolic, must not make us forget how much in these liturgies is of later date.

The meaning and purpose of the service.

We next proceed to study the true meaning and the full purpose of the service. There are some five chief aspects in which men have regarded it, and our object will be to examine these first in the light of Scripture, and then with whatever additional guidance we can obtain.

The meaning of the word "Remembrance."

I. *The Holy Communion as a Remembrance.*—This name brings us back to the most primitive and most universal idea of the service. There can be no authority so high as that of our Lord's own words, "This do, *in remembrance of Me.*" It is true that different schools of thought have placed different meanings upon these words, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, but the thought of remembrance, of recalling to mind our loving Redeemer in the night of His Passion, is a common factor to them all.

The word ἀνάμνησις is therefore one of the crucial points in our inquiry. Now there is no reason to doubt its

original meaning, for in classical use without exception, in the only other passage where it occurs in the New Testament (Heb. x. 3), and in the majority of places where it is used by the Greek translators of the Old Testament, it has this simple meaning of "recollection." The question has however arisen, whether anything in this particular context throws a special shade of meaning upon the word as used by Christ on this most momentous occasion—viz., that of a sacrificial character. The strong presumption from the word itself is that no such additional idea is probable. In the first place, classical usage is wholly against it. Again, in Heb. x. 3 we have the only light which the New Testament affords; and it is there used of that *remembrance* of sins which was made year by year on the Day of Atonement. Every year on that solemn day, the only fast of the Mosaic Calendar, the pious Israelite was reminded by unique ritual what a terrible burden was that of unforgiven sin, while in clear and striking type he was taught how God had provided a means by which that sin was borne away into "a solitary land" (Lev. xvi. 22). So far therefore as New Testament use goes, it confirms the simple meaning, it adds nothing to it.

In the Septuagint itself ἀνάμνησις occurs five times, to which we may add one reference in Symmachus, and one in an unknown translator. In Ps. vi. 3 (Symmachus) the words are, "In death there is no *remembrance* of Thee"; and in Ps. cxxxv. 13 (unknown translator), "My *memorial* throughout all generations." Here the meaning is perfectly clear as in classical use, and as in Heb. x.; it is simply

"recollection." The same meaning is undoubted in Wisdom xvi. 6, "for a *remembrance* of Thy Law"—it is the simplest act of calling to mind; and the same may be said of its use in Ps. xxxviii. 1, when the words are, "for a remembrance of the Sabbath." Again, in Ps. lxx. 1, the words *εἰς ἀνάμνησιν, εἰς τὸ Σῶσαί με Κύριον* are interpreted by the Vulgate to denote a remembrance of a past deliverance, though the Greek words seem intended to recall to mind some well-known melody to which the psalm was sung.

The two remaining passages have suggested to some an argument for regarding the elements in the Lord's Supper as a sacrificial memorial offered to God. In Numb. x. 10 it is said of the act of blowing the trumpets,[1] "And it shall be a remembrance for you before God," with which we must compare verse 9, "And ye shall be remembered (*ἀναμνησθήσεσθε*) before the Lord." And in Levit. xxiv. 7 we read of the shewbread, "And the loaves shall be for a remembrance" (*εἰς ἀνάμνησιν*). In these two passages the word is used in connection with the thought of such an approach to God as is always made in prayer and praise, but they do not prove that *ἀνάμνησις* can mean an objective memorial. They cannot outweigh the meaning suggested by the form of the word itself, backed by classical as well as other LXX. and New Testament use.

Three things are thus made clear: (1) The ordinary use of the word is that of simple *recollection*. (2) The LXX. use it in two contexts where an appeal is made to God such as we ourselves make in our prayers and praises. (3) There

[1] The LXX. did not here regard the sacrifices as an *ἀνάμνησις*, for they use a singular verb, *ἔσται*.

is no sacrificial meaning whatever in the word itself. It may be used in a sacrificial context, just as any other neutral word may be; but *ἀνάμνησις* in itself never denotes a specially sacrificial idea. The word denotes an act of the mind, not an objective memorial. To offer prayer and praise through the merits of Christ's sacrifice may itself be called a sacrifice (Heb. xiii. 15), and this sacrifice we offer in the whole service of Communion, but we do not offer the consecrated elements as a memorial sacrifice of the Death of Christ.

We shall do well to rest content with this thought, which covers, as we shall see later on, all that our formularies warrant, that in our recollection of the Redeemer's death, when we eat the bread and drink the wine, we cannot but rest our souls upon the merits of that sacrifice, and, although no word of it is spoken, there cannot fail to be the silent heart-pleading with God that those merits may be our own. Beyond this, no general consideration and no possible meaning of *ἀνάμνησις* can fairly carry us.

The three chief ideas which centre in the thought. (1) A Remembrance.

We can now gather and arrange the several ideas which centre in this word, as describing the service of Holy Communion. First and foremost, it describes the sacrament as a Remembrance. That this is the predominant idea of our own Communion Office admits of no manner of doubt. The primary purpose is laid down as follows: "And *that we should alway remember* the exceeding love of our Master and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which, by His precious blood-shedding, He hath obtained for us, He

hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death."[1] In strictly parallel terms the children are taught in the Catechism that the Lord's Supper was ordained "for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." It is strange that any one can take these words to mean that the main purpose of the institution was to plead before God the sacrifice of the death of Christ; for even if this were the natural meaning of the first clause, the addition of the second, with its strictly parallel reference to the *benefits of that death*, forbids the explanation. A meaning must be assigned to Remembrance in that answer of the Catechism which will cover both the death and the benefits received thereby. The Lord's Supper (we are taught) was ordained to recall both these things to mind. Yet in hundreds of our Day and Sunday schools the simple words of the Catechism are thus being wrested from their plain meaning, to teach what in a sense is true, but is being pressed and distorted into positive error.[2] We are on firm ground when we say that both Exhortation and Catechism teach that the primary and predominant purpose of this sacrament is that of Remembrance.[3]

[1] Exhortation III.

[2] It is this distorted view of truth which lies at the root of "Children's Eucharists"—a custom wholly without warrant in our Church of England.

[3] Archbishop Trench (New Testament Synonyms, p. 59) refers to the "Aristotelian and Platonic distinction between 'memory' (μνήμη) and 'recollection' or 'reminiscence' (ἀνάμνησις), the first being instinctive, and common to beasts with men; the second being the *reviving* of faded impressions by a distinct act of the will, the reflux, at the bidding of the

(2) A Celebration.

But, secondly, this inward remembrance will most certainly issue in outward celebration. No devout mind, realising what Christ's death has wrought, can possibly stop at bare remembrance—it will forthwith express itself in thankful adoration and praise. To this once more our third Exhortation goes on to invite us: "To Him, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks." And at an earlier part: "Above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world," &c., &c. Thus the remembrance which the participation in this holy rite produces is no mere bare cold act of recollection, but it is "a thankful remembrance of His death."[1]

(3) A Memorial.

Once more, this remembrance will issue in proclamation to others. There can be no more telling sermon on the Cross of Christ than this habitual loving, thankful celebration of His dying for mankind. Perhaps we, who call ourselves Protestants, fail to realise that this is one part of the great central purpose of Remembrance. But St Paul says plainly: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do *proclaim* (καταγγέλλετε) the Lord's death till He come."[2] Here, then, another thought converges to this

mind, of knowledge which has once ebbed." Olympiodorus calls the latter the "regeneration of knowledge." This is the invariable meaning outside Hellenistic Greek, and the natural meaning of the word, if we are to judge from the context, in the two New Testament passages where it is used.

[1] Church Catechism.

[2] It is only painful necessity which leads me here again to call attention to the serious misapplication of these words which is being constantly made in books and sermons on this subject. This word, καταγγέλλετε, is made

central notion—namely, that of putting others in remembrance. The Lord's Supper is therefore not only (1) a Remembrance, and (2) a Commemoration, but also (3) a Memorial. Just as a memorial church or window puts ourselves or others in memory of some good person or of some heroic deed, so the Lord's Supper is a constant memorial to others, telling them of, and, it may be, winning them to welcome for themselves, the Lord's great love to man.

This view is supported by the purpose of the Passover.

These we claim to be the three chief thoughts wrapped up in the word *ἀνάμνησις*. And our conclusion receives strong confirmation when we remember, first of all, what the Passover was to Israel, and then that the Last Supper was a paschal meal. The analogy, therefore, of the purpose of the Passover is strictly to the point.

Now, the Passover was instituted to perpetuate in the minds of the Israelites the great deliverance which God had wrought. It reminded those who kept it of that deliverance; it also pressed the fact on the attention of those who did not understand its meaning. It was a thankful commemoration for themselves; it was a salutary reminder to others of their greatest national rescue. In Exodus xii. 26 we read, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel

to denote the presenting of a sacrificial memorial to God! Whatever be the truth of this idea, it is absolutely certain that no New Testament or any other support can be produced for such a meaning here. Yet this wrong interpretation is being sown broadcast, to emphasise an aspect of the sacrament with which this text, at any rate, has nothing to do.

in Egypt." Cf. Ex. xiii. 9, and Deut. xvi. 3.[1] Such was the purpose of the paschal celebration, and the Last Supper was the paschal meal. Nor, again, will this thankful remembrance, this joyful commemoration, stop short of the most intense and earnest pleading before God of the merits of the great atonement. Never, never ought we to recall Christ's death without the instant resting our sinful souls upon its infinite propitiation. Our service is full of the thought, it leads us again and again to trust ourselves for everything to the boundless love of God in Jesus. But we should also notice with what utmost caution our Reformers treated this truth. Sacred and Scriptural and primitive as it is, the medieval Church had so "poisoned the wells of Scripture and of primitive truth by disastrous perversions" that it became necessary to preserve the right proportion of this truth, and to guard it against misuse, with a care that seemed needless in earlier ages. For it is upon this doctrine—namely, that in the consecrated elements the priest offers to God a specially acceptable memorial of the death of Christ—that the whole fabric of "the Mass" has been built. On this point we must take a firm stand. All that we can do, all that the priest can do, as God's minister and ours, has nothing in common with that which our Lord did once for all on Calvary. That sacrifice can in no sense be offered now.[2] Hence in our service the plead-

[1] "That thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life."

[2] See Dimock on 'The One Offering.' Elliot Stock. We say it with all reverence, even Christ does not now *offer* that sacrifice. See Heb. x. 12.

ing of Christ's merits is very carefully dissociated from any offering of the bread and wine to God. That pleading pervades the whole service, is present in every part; but the mention of a memorial "celebrated and made" before God with the consecrated elements, though present in 1549, and though the words in themselves are capable of right construction, was omitted in 1552, and deliberately excluded in 1662. Thus, so far as our Prayer-book leads us, it is in the whole service, not in any special oblation of the consecrated bread and wine; it is by the whole congregation, not by the presbyter in a specially sacerdotal act,—that the memorial of Christ's death is celebrated in the sight of God, and with earnest prayer that the merits of that sacrifice may be ours. The time of most intense pleading will surely be, as Bishop Bickersteth has expressed it, when we ourselves receive those visible pledges of salvation:—

> "And as we eat this bread and drink this wine,
> Plead His once offered sacrifice divine."

A Covenant Sign.

II. *The Holy Communion as a Covenant Sign.* — This aspect is closely linked to the next which we shall consider; but it will better clear the way if we speak of them separately. The Covenant Feast will best be approached by way of the Covenant Sign.

Here we are brought face to face with two methods of arriving at the meaning of this ordinance. It is possible to approach it by way of subsequent development. It is also possible to do so by way of Old Testament preparation. We must by no means exclude the former; but we claim

that the latter is the truly scientific method of approach to the question, What is the true character and purpose of the Lord's Supper?

The sacraments of the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament we have a sacramental system. God's older Covenant with His people had its outward and visible signs, as well as the New Covenant of the latter days, and it seems reasonable that in our search for the meaning of the sacraments of the New Testament, we should take our start from the sacraments of the Old.

It is a mark of God's love to man that He has made a covenant with him about salvation. A promise might have been enough, but a covenant conveys more comfort and assurance than a bare promise. God assigns to man his part, while He engages to fulfil His own, and thus we feel conscious of a closer relation, a stronger tie.

Moreover, it is a mark of God's consideration for man that He has given definite covenant signs or seals, not only to remind us, but also to assure us by visible and even tangible symbols of His promise and our duty. Such was the Rainbow to Noah, the Rock and the Brazen Serpent to Israel in the wilderness. Above all, such were Circumcision and the Passover, which were the two great sacraments of the Jewish Church.

Circumcision.

Circumcision was the outward sign of a formal agreement between God and man; it involved blessing on the one side, and service on the other,—"It shall be a token of the covenant" (Gen. xvii. 9-14). It is described by St Paul, in the case of Abraham, as "the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." Circumcision, then, is a sign and a

seal. It is a sign of God's promise and of our duty: it is a visible seal of the blessings conveyed in the Covenant.

The same is true of the Passover. It reminded the Jew of his relation to God. It visibly bound him over to keep the law of God, while on the other side it was a visible seal or certificate that He who had brought His people out of Egypt would continue to provide for their needs. The Jewish sacraments were thus title-deeds to promised blessings on certain covenanted conditions.

The Passover.

It is only reasonable to expect that Christian sacraments will be at least what Jewish sacraments were, and probably something more. There is a strong presumption to start with that they will be signs and seals of the New Covenant, and the New Testament leaves no doubt about it. Baptism is Christian circumcision according to St Paul (Col. ii. 11, 12); it was evidently appointed by our Lord, and used by His apostles as the solemn rite of initiation into the New Covenant. And so we are led step by step to the belief that the Lord's Supper is a covenant sign, reminding us of our duty, and binding us to its fulfilment, by a visible sealing to us of all the blessings of Christ's death.

This forms an argument that Christian sacraments are covenant signs.

And when we turn from these *a priori* arguments to the actual words of institution, we find that the above result is strictly true. It is at a paschal supper—*i.e.*, at a covenanting meal—that the Lord's Supper is instituted, and it is stamped as federal in its nature by the Lord Himself. All four accounts bear witness to the use of the word "covenant" (*διαθήκη*), as intimating the purpose of the institution: "For this is My blood of the New Covenant"

This view is borne out by the words of institution.

(St Matt., St Mark). "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood" (St Luke, St Paul). No words can be more explicit than these.

Its practical value.

It is, therefore, by way of the Covenant that we best approach the further meaning of this holy feast. And not only is it the most reasonable way of approach, it is also the fullest of practical teaching. It brings a man face to face with the most important of all questions, his relation to God. The Covenant sign tells us to what God has pledged Himself through Jesus; it tests our own attitude to what God has promised. It is a Covenant of pardon: "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is a Covenant of renewal: "I will write My laws in their minds." These blessings are offered to all in this federal rite; they are given, taken, and received through sacred symbol, yet only by the repentant and believing soul.

This view our English Communion Service confirms.

Our own Office is based on this Covenant conception. It does not, like the Baptismal Office, mark the first entrance into New Covenant relations; but it reminds us of those relations, and bids us lay fresh hold upon them. Holy Communion marks not the entrance upon Covenant relations, but the renewal of them. It is the sacrament, not of incorporation, but of support.

We can in this way see why the Ten Commandments and the Creed are used at the very commencement of our Communion Service.[1] The service as a whole is a Covenanting rite, and it first of all applies a plain test

[1] The Creed has been used in this position from very early times, but the Commandments were added by our Reformers in 1552.

as to our Baptismal vows of renunciation, faith, and obedience. The Commandments and the Creed are presented as touchstones of repentance, faith, and duty. What we engaged ourselves to at Baptism and Confirmation, we are now called upon to reaffirm and to renew. To take and eat the bread, to drink the wine, is to say in solemn act that we bind ourselves afresh to our Baptismal vows, and that we accept once more with simple faith, and with adoring love, God's covenanted mercies, once more exhibited, secured, and made over to us by covenant seal.

Sacraments are not merely positive duties, they are also sacred rites.

For we must not forget that there are the two sides to every sacrament, God's part as well as ours. Sacraments are regarded by some as mere duties to be fulfilled. The Lord has told us to do this in remembrance of Him, and in simple obedience we do as we have been told. It is, in this light, a positive duty but little more. Such a view is but one part of the truth, and empties the sacrament of half its comfort and blessing. For sacraments (as Dr Waterland says) are "not merely duties of ours, but sacred rites, in which God Himself bears a part."[1] Now when we realise the covenant meaning of the Lord's Supper, it is certain that we shall no longer regard it as a bare duty, which we do not understand, which is mysterious and hard to explain, yet which we readily fulfil; but we shall treat it as a sacred rite full of gracious meaning, a sign indeed, but a most gracious and effectual sign, bearing to us a message from our Heavenly Father bidding us come to meet Him, and to take a blessing. And this is precisely what our Homilies teach: "In the sacraments God embraces us, and

[1] Doctrine of the Eucharist. Introduction.

offereth Himself to be embraced by us;" and again, "They set out to the eyes and other outward senses the inward workings of God's free mercy, and seal in our hearts the promises of God."

A further step from Covenant Sign to Covenant Feast.

We now take a further step, which will bring us naturally to our next division. In olden times covenants were ratified by feasting. The custom arose from the slaying of an animal in sacrifice,[1] which sacrifice was regarded as binding both parties to the mutual engagement, and afterwards the animal was consumed at a sacrificial feast, which afforded a most expressive symbol of the peace and fellowship thus established. When Isaac made a covenant with Abimelech, we read that "he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink" (Gen. xxvi. 28, 30). When Jacob at Mizpah in Gilead made a covenant with Laban that neither would pass that way to do the other harm, we read of first the sacrifice and then the feast: "Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread."

The Passover itself is another instance, as are all the sacrificial feasts of the Jews, notably the feast of the peace-offering, when priest and people together feasted before God in token of restored friendship and goodwill.

The incidental reference to the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor. x. confirms this idea.

Then there is a further reason for believing that this is the true way of approach to the Lord's Supper as a feast. For in 1 Cor. x. 14-21 St Paul is speaking of the dangers to Christians of such feasts in idol temples. He illustrates the *danger* of the idol feasts by pointing to the recognised

[1] The Hebrew and Greek phrase to "cut a covenant," and the Latin to "strike a covenant," are thus explained.

blessing of the Jewish sacrificial feast on the one hand (v. 18), and of the great Christian feast, the Lord's Supper, on the other. Influence, he argues, there must be in all such sacred rites, but in some cases it makes for good, in others for evil. It is a fair conclusion from the whole passage, (1) that the Lord's Supper is a Covenant feast, a feast upon an already offered sacrifice; and (2) that definite blessing is the result of worthy reception, even the communion of the body and of the blood of Christ.

Thus, by regarding the Lord's Supper as a Covenanting rite, we have arrived quite naturally at our next point of view—namely, the Lord's Supper as a sacred feast.

III. *The Holy Communion as a Sacramental Feast.*—Let us recall the point at which we have arrived. Like the Jewish sacrificial feasts, the Lord's Supper is a feast after and upon a sacrifice, the sacrifice forming the ground of the Covenant, and the feast being the solemn rite of ratification. An additional confirmation of this view is found in the fact that the Lord's Supper is the Christian Passover.

The Lord's Supper is a feast upon a sacrifice.

In the Lord's Supper we have a sacred banquet. It is a feast of remembrance, it is a feast of covenant force, but it is more,—for in it we feed on Christ, we are nourished by the Body and Blood of the Lamb of God, who has been sacrificed once for all, and offered once for all, to "take away the sin of the world."

An objection is made to this view that there can be no true sacrificial feast save on a sacrifice just offered. This was the argument of Mr John Johnson, a learned and devout Nonjuror, who contended that it is absurd to suppose

An objection to this view.

that we "feast on something that is a sacrifice, and not offered."[1] We can understand the objection from a Romanist who believes that the priest does truly offer Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice to God, but the objection has no weight from those who say that the offering is not strictly an offering of Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice, but merely the offering of a memorial of that sacrifice. If this latter view be true, then the sacrifice is long past and over; in the Eucharist we can but "celebrate and make the memorial" of it.

But this is no valid objection to the Lord's Supper, as a feast after and upon a sacrifice, a view which has been fully and ably set forth by Dr Cudworth, one of the leading "Cambridge Platonists" of the seventeenth century. Christ's body and blood *were* sacrificed and offered more than eighteen centuries ago, and it is upon that sacrifice offered once for all that we now feed. "Christ our Passover *was sacrificed* [ἐτύθη] for us," and it is therefore that we "keep the feast." The manner in which we feed, and the means by which we feed, are matters for further consideration. All we now set forth is that in this sacrificial feast we feed on the Body and Blood of Christ, sacrificed for us on Calvary. Of that once finished sacrifice our service speaks in words which echo with unique emphasis the clear teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Who made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." We feast upon that Passion. It is a sacramental feast, by which we mean

[1] The Unbloody Sacrifice, by J. Johnson.

that the elements are not the real Body and Blood just offered, but their appointed symbols, receiving which, "according to Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, we are made partakers of His most blessed body and blood."[1] In the words of Dr Waterland, "The sacrificial feast which we here plead for is not a feast of the mouth but of the mind; not a bodily banquet but a banquet of the soul, *upon the fruits of the death of Christ.*"[2]

The meaning of "eating the flesh" and "drinking the blood" of Christ.

This naturally leads to an inquiry as to the meaning of the words, to "eat the flesh" and to "drink the blood" of Christ. They are found in the sixth chapter of St John, where they have a more general meaning, and in a different form they occur in 1 Cor. x. 16, where they are specially applied to the case of the Lord's Supper. "The bread which we break, is it not the Communion [joint-partaking] of the Body of Christ? The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16.)

The more general view in St John vi. considered.

In St John the propositions are so universal that it is most improbable that they are to be interpreted directly of the Eucharist. The words are, of course, again and again applied to the case of the Eucharist, which looks back to St John vi. and is the appointed sacrament of that spiritual feeding; but there are many passages which show that the Fathers, our own Reformers, and indeed some Roman Catholic writers, understood St John vi. to mean that spiritual feeding in general, of which the Eucharistic Feast was only the most significant example.

[1] Prayer of Consecration.

[2] Doctrine of the Eucharist, chap. xi. p. 325. Clarendon Press.

Thus Tertullian[1] on St John vi. 35 uses the words, "I am the bread of life," to illustrate the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread"; but he could hardly have done so had he restricted the meaning of the chapter to the Eucharist. Origen[2] says distinctly, "Moreover, we are said to drink the blood of Christ, not only in the use of sacraments, but also when we receive His words, in which life consists, as also He Himself says: 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and life.'" Cyprian,[3] like Tertullian, connects the phrase of John vi. with the petition in the Lord's Prayer, and distinguishes between coming daily to the Eucharist and feeding on Christ Himself, who may be eaten by means of daily prayer, when one is debarred from coming to the sacrament. The conclusion drawn by Dr Waterland as to what the Fathers taught on St John vi. is that in the first three centuries they did not, as a whole, interpret it exclusively or directly of the Lord's Supper, while they did apply it to that sacrament as the special means appointed for spiritual feeding upon Christ.

Dr Moule draws attention to the fact that Ferus the Franciscan of Mainz, in the sixteenth century, is only one of a long chain of Romanist teachers who deny the direct reference to the Eucharist. "Christ saith, 'Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, ye shall not have life in you.' He speaketh not there of the Sacrament; for all are not condemned who take not it. He speaketh of spiritual eating, . . . without which no man shall see God." Ferus further points out that all who in Old Testament

[1] Tert. de Orat., vi. [2] Origen on Numbers, Hom. xvi.
[3] Cypr. de Orat. Domin.

times accepted God's promises, did truly eat Christ's body (in which point St Jerome agrees), and then comes the striking passage: "Christ is offered also to us in the Sacrament, which is done to this end, that by this outward sign we may be admonished of the promise, and may be certified by this bodily eating that in very deed Christ is given unto us with all His treasures." (Ferus in Matt. c. 26, quoted by Dr Moule in the Report of the Islington Clerical Meeting, 1899.)

The Reformers as a whole followed this view, and Archbishop Cranmer's words are worthy of special notice: "Whoe ever said or taught before this tyme, that the Sacrament was the cause why Christ said, Yf wee eat not the fleshe of the Son of Man, wee have not lyfe in us? The spiritual eating of his flesh, and drincking of his bloud by faith, . . . is the cause wherefore Christe sayd, that if we eat not his fleshe, and drincke not his bloud, we have not lyfe in us. . . . And yf Christe had never ordeyned the Sacrament, yet wee should have eaten his flesh, and dronken his blood, and have had thereby everlasting life."

The case of infants precludes any such limited reference.

There is, moreover, a practical consideration which should have prevented this mistake. If the statements of St John vi. have a direct and unqualified reference to the Eucharist, then the logical consequence must be that children ought to be partakers of it, otherwise they are not partakers of Christ's life, since they do not eat His flesh, or drink His blood.

It has been rightly said that Baptism is the "sure witness and effectual sign," to children, of all the spiritual grace and sustenance that they need, and we want no

clearer evidence that there can be in St John vi. no direct or exclusive reference to the Lord's Supper. The case of infants shows that Christ offers Himself to us as heavenly food in Holy Baptism, as well as in Holy Communion; and this exclusive interpretation of St John vi. being rejected, the simple truth stands forth, that to feed upon Christ's flesh and blood is a privilege not restricted to either sacrament, but sealed to us in both, and enjoyed by us whenever we hold Spiritual Communion with the Lord. It is none the less true that the Lord's Supper was instituted with special reference to the truth of St John vi., and is the appointed sacrament of this sacred food.

The special case of spiritual feeding by sacred symbols.

We now turn from this feeding by faith, which is independent of external circumstance, to that special means of grace in which, by sacred symbols ordained by Christ Himself, we "spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood."[1]

St Paul says, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" and again, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16.) Not only did our Lord make the support of our inner life dependent upon the nourishment of the soul, but He also appointed "holy mysteries," sacramental symbols, which were to be one special means of spiritual sustenance. The Lord's Supper is a gracious opportunity, created by Christ Himself, of this Spiritual Communion with Him.

Now when we seek to answer the question, What does eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood amount to?

[1] Communion Service, Exhortation iii.

it is of great moment to remember this distinction between the spiritual eating and drinking which St John describes, and that sacramental eating and drinking which is our privilege in the Holy Eucharist. For we learn that to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man is in itself independent of the consecrated elements at the Eucharist. The child who has never received the elements at all can do so. The Christian who is by circumstance separated from the outward means of grace can do so. According to our own Church, and even the Church of Rome, the believing sick person, who is not fit to receive the sacred symbols, can do so.[1] It is abundantly evident, therefore, that such eating and drinking is quite independent of any particular theory about the Lord's presence in His sacrament, and should be considered apart from such theories.

Let us come more closely to the meaning of the words. We do not wish to define too exactly, yet some limits of definition are necessary, if we are to guard from error.

No strictly literal interpretation ever attempted.

No school of theologians really teach that the words "eat the body" and "drink the blood" can be taken in their strictly literal meaning. Those who teach Transubstantiation do not do so. They have had to bring in an elaborate theory about "substance" and "accidents," for the very purpose of qualifying these words. No intelligent

[1] I refer to our remarkable rubric on Spiritual Communion. The words are: "He doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he doth not receive the sacrament with his mouth." The whole rubric is admirably worded, and deserves careful attention. And it is founded on the following words from the Sarum Office of Extreme Unction: "*Frater in hoc casu sufficit tibi vera fides et bona voluntas,* TANTUM CREDE ET MANDUCASTI.

Romanist states that the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and that the wine becomes His Blood. What they teach is, that the *substance of the bread* gives place to *the substance of the body*, and so for the wine and blood. The *accidents* are *not* the accidents of the Lord's body and blood, they are those of the bread and wine. This is a very important qualification: it removes the gross material idea which offends our common-sense and our feelings of good taste. But it also proves that some qualification of the literal meaning of the words is absolutely necessary. Nor will the theory of Consubstantiation remove the necesssity. According to that theory, while we eat the bread and drink the wine, they are still bread and wine, but "with, in, and under" those natural elements, just as fire is combined with iron when the iron is red hot,[1] the true Body and Blood of Christ are present, so as to be received by the worthy and the unworthy alike. Such an elaborate explanation, even if accepted, implies a serious qualification of the plain and simple words.

This must be still more clear in the case of those who, like the Nonjurors and many churchmen of to-day, hold that there is a kind of spiritual presence, described by Dr Waterland as "I know not what impanation of the Spirit." Here we have a more reasonable but still greater qualification of the literal words.

Some qualifying explanation necessary.

All such theories are practical confessions that some qualifying explanation is necessary—in other words, that some metaphor must lie somewhere in these words, "eat the

[1] The illustration is, of course, based on a scientific mistake, but it was used by Luther, and illustrates what he meant by this theory.

flesh" and "drink the blood of the Son of man." A learned writer, named Albertinus,[1] raises the question whether this metaphor lies in the words "flesh and blood," or in the words "eat and drink." It may come to the same thing in the end, but it will save much confusion of thought if we have some clear understanding on the point. His words are worth quoting at length: "Moreover, the figure is not in the word 'flesh,' for the true flesh of Christ must be eaten for life; it follows therefore that it is in the word 'eat,' which is transferred by figure from the organs of the body to the powers of the soul." And again, "Flesh and blood denote nothing else but what the words plainly mean (*præ se ferunt*) and so are neither a riddle (*ænigma*) nor a parable. . . . But that by no means shows that the word 'eat' is not metaphorical, or that such eating must not be understood of spiritual feeding."

Where does the metaphor lie?

Granted, then, that some qualification is necessary, there is one which is simple, natural, and reasonable. We require no metaphor to explain the flesh and the blood; they are the very flesh and blood which hung upon the cross, and were there separated in death for our redemption. We are led back to the same night in which the Lord was betrayed, we follow Him as He bends beneath the cross and bears it to Calvary, we see that sacred body torn by nails and pierced by spear; and it is that very human flesh, that very human blood of the Son of man that we remember when we fulfil His last command. There is no metaphor here; there is none needed, for has not He Him-

There is no metaphor in "flesh and blood," but in "eating and drinking."

[1] Quoted by Waterland, Doctrine of the Eucharist (Clarendon Press), p. 119, note h.

self said, "Do this *in remembrance* of Me"? We do remember Him, and we do it as exactly and as literally as we possibly can. We need admit no metaphor in the "flesh" and "blood."

But when we speak of "eating" and of "drinking" that flesh and blood, then the presence of metaphor is felt. None can escape it. In no sense do we strictly and literally eat physically the flesh and blood of our Lord. The Romanist and Lutheran and Nonjuror all modify the words "flesh and blood"; we do not do so, but we claim that it is quite as justifiable, and far more reasonable, to modify the thought of *eating* that flesh and of *drinking* that blood.

And the metaphor is most easy. It simply transfers the figure from body to soul. What the bread and wine do for our bodies, that the flesh and blood of Christ do for our souls. We eat the bread and wine—that is, we derive to ourselves their nourishment, their blessing. We eat the flesh and blood of Christ—that is to say, we receive by faith the nourishment and the blessing which the flesh and blood of Christ, His Incarnation and Death, have wrought for our salvation. In this light the words of our Church Catechism seem full of fresh meaning, "What is the inward and spiritual grace?" "The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ as our bodies are by the bread and wine."

Such is the meaning of "eating the flesh," "drinking the blood," of the spiritual feeding described in St John vi., and such the meaning of the "Communion (or joint partaking) of the body and blood of Christ" in 1 Cor. x. It is to re-

ceive the fruits of the body broken upon the cross, and of the blood there shed; in other words, to take to ourselves the benefits of the Atonement. In strict harmony with this, we pray in the prayer which immediately follows reception, that, "by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion."

There is nothing in Scripture, there is nothing in our service, to lead us to suppose that in Holy Communion we receive a special kind of grace, which can be received then and then alone. But there is every reason to believe, humbly yet trustfully, that times of Holy Communion are times of special opportunity, when we may with clearer faith, and fuller hope, and warmer love, embrace God, as He offers Himself in holy symbol to be embraced by us, and when we may receive "without measure" the blessed benefits of Christ's body and blood.

The work of God the Holy Spirit.

Nor must it be forgotten that this is the direct work of God the Holy Spirit upon the human soul. When we pray, in our Prayer of Consecration, "that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine . . . may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood," we are most truly praying for the presence and help of the Holy Spirit, for it is only by the Holy Spirit that we can feed on Christ. It is He who, coming down upon the recipients in His gracious power, brings the presence of Christ into their hearts, not indeed through material channels of bread and wine, but yet so that in the use of them every faithful recipient is made partaker of His blessing.

The true view to be taken of the elements themselves. They are relatively holy.

Very few words are now needed to explain what is the actual relation of the bread and wine to the body and blood of Christ, or in scholastic terms, of the *Sacramentum* to the *Res Sacramenti*.[1] In the Prayer of Consecration the elements are solemnly set apart to bear a very close relation to the Lord's body and blood. They bear, though in higher degree, just such a "relative holiness" as do the paper and binding of a Bible, which we treat with reverence because of their close relation to the Word of God. Or, to take a more secular illustration, the material of which our national flag is made becomes sacred, not in itself, but in relation to the national honour which it represents. Or, to take an illustration from St Paul, our daily food, when separated for use "by the Word of God and prayer," becomes "sanctified." If these things thus contract a sacred character in proportion to the value and dignity of what they represent, so do the consecrated bread and wine when set apart to a very close and effectual relation to the very body and blood of Christ.

It is no mark of true Protestantism to speak lightly of or treat lightly the seals and signs of our redemption. They are indeed and in truth "Holy things for holy men."[2]

They are, moreover, "instruments of conveyance."

As St Bernard has well put it, this relation may be aptly illustrated by the instruments of investiture by which certain dignities and positions are conveyed to those who are appointed to receive them. A canon receives office by

[1] This is an old scholastic distinction out of which sprang the term "real presence"—*i.e.*, the presence of the *res sacramenti*, which we claim to be physically absent.

[2] A phrase common to all early liturgies.

a book, an abbot by a staff and ring; just so, St Bernard says, various graces are conveyed by various sacraments. They are not only "symbols to represent," but also "instruments to convey."

Waterland's[1] chapter on this subject is worthy of careful study, and we will close this part of our subject by quoting some of his words. "Frequently in human affairs things or persons are considered very differently from what they really are in themselves, by a kind of construction of law; and they are supposed to be, to all intents and purposes, and in full legal effect, what they are presumed to serve for, and to supply the place of." "A deed of conveyance, or any like instrument under hand and seal, is not a real estate, but it conveys one; and it is in effect the estate itself, as the estate goes along with it, and as the right, title, and property (which are real acquirements) are, as it were, bound up in it. If any person should seriously object, in such a case, that he sees nothing but wax and parchments, and that he does not apprehend how they can be of any extraordinary value to him, or how he is made richer by them, he might be pitied for his unthinking ignorance or simplicity; but if, in a contrary extreme, he should be credulous enough to imagine that the parchments themselves are really the estate, are so many houses, or tenements, or acres of glebe, enclosed in his cabinet, he could not well be presumed to be far short of distraction."

We may, with Dr Waterland, be content to "leave it to the intelligent reader to make the application proper to the present subject."

[1] Doctrine of the Eucharist, ch. vii.

The term "Eucharistic sacrifice" justifiable, but in the present day misleading.

IV. *The Holy Communion as a Eucharist.*—Most of us are familiar with the phrase "Eucharistic sacrifice" as applied to this service, and in itself it is not only justifiable, but conveys a very necessary truth. Yet so great and serious has been the distortion of this truth, and so frequently has error been promoted under cover of this phrase, that we, as Protestants, must shrink from its use, except when guarded by careful definition. As this caution and reserve are impossible in popular use, is it not better to shrink from language which, though justified by wide and early usage, has now become identified with unprimitive ideas? For that reason we have avoided the expression "Eucharistic sacrifice" as descriptive of Holy Communion.

The meaning and use of the word Eucharist.

The word "Eucharist" means simply Thanksgiving. We can hardly be justified in taking the word εὐχαριστία in 1 Cor. xiv. 16[1] as bearing this special meaning; but in the 'Didachè' (c. 9), and in Ignatius, who wrote early in the second century, the word is used several times of the Lord's Supper,[2] and after him Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement, and others use the word as a recognised name.

There is the highest authority for this association of ideas. The Lord Himself, before He brake the bread, "gave thanks" (εὐλόγησας, St Matthew, St Mark; εὐχαρίστησας, St Luke, St Paul). It is in this sense that our Holy Communions are Eucharists. We do as our Lord did. He "gave thanks," and "brake it," and "gave it to

[1] "How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy *giving of thanks*" (*Eucharistia*).

[2] Ignatius, Ep. ad Phil. iv.; ad Smyrn., 6, 8.

His disciples." We do not read of any elevation of the bread for the adoration of the disciples; we do not read of its being presented to His Father as a Eucharistic Oblation. He simply gave thanks, brake it, and at once gave it to them to eat.

Two kinds of sacrifice in the Gospel.

The sacrifices of the Gospel may be comprised under two heads,[1] the one propitiatory, the other eucharistic. Firstly, there is that of our Lord upon the Cross, which alone is propitiatory; secondly, there is that of the Church when she offers herself, which is wholly eucharistic. Both of these are recognised in Holy Communion, for the first is commemorated while its benefits are received, the second is there and then actually offered.

Tested by our own service.

We may test this view by our own service. Again and again the once-offered sacrifice of Christ Himself is mentioned. We remember it, we commemorate it, we plead in prayer as the ground of our acceptance with God. But when we seek to know *what sacrifices we ourselves actually offer*, there is not a word said of any continued offering of Christ's sacrifice, or even of its memorial as being a sacrifice, but the sacrifice named as our own is the Church's offering of herself, individually and collectively, in response to, and in the strength of, the Lord's great sacrifice which is then being commemorated.

Thus in the Church Catechism we are bidden to come with "a thankful remembrance of His death." In the third Exhortation we are bidden, "above all things, to give most humble and hearty thanks to God . . . for the redemption

[1] Cf. Waterland's Doctrine of the Eucharist, ch. xii., where he quotes various passages from St Augustine as holding this view.

of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ." And the close of that Exhortation is as follows: "To Him therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks." And again, after the "Sursum Corda," occurs the phrase, "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God," with the answer, "It is meet and right so to do." The prefaces which follow are all so worded as to draw out intelligent as well as heartfelt thanksgiving, according to the special aspect of God's revelation which the season recalls.

Moreover, in the first prayer after Communion these acts of Eucharistic worship are called a Sacrifice. "We beseech Thee to accept this *our sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving." Indeed the whole of the Post-Communion Service is Eucharistic in the highest sense, leading us up to a climax of spiritual sacrifice in the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" with which our service draws to a close.[1]

This Eucharist is once again expressed as the offering of ourselves. In the same Post-Communion Prayer we say, almost in the words of St Paul, "And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee" (Rom. xii. 1). Our thanksgiving is not to be merely the outpouring of our hearts' devotion, but it is to be prompted by the mercies we are commemorating—the conscious devoting of ourselves, our lives, to God's service.

And yet again, the holiest impulses are harmful if we

[1] The Gloria in Excelsis was used at the very commencement of the service up to 1552. The change of position was a great gain to the Eucharistic idea of our service.

do not translate them into holy habit. From earliest ages, then, almsgiving has formed an essential factor in Eucharistic worship. No public celebration of communion is allowed without the incitation and the definite opportunity to "let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven." The offertory is the practical expression of the thankfulness which we profess. In it we ask God to "accept our alms and oblations" as well as to "receive these our prayers." To do good and to distribute is a necessary part of a true Eucharist, "for with *such sacrifices* God is well pleased."

These then, our thanksgivings, our gifts for God's service, ourselves, together with all the prayer and worship of the service, are the sacrifices which belong to every true celebration of the Eucharist, and which our Church has definitely named.

This cannot but include in some sense the commemoration of our Lord's death. Such an act of devotion, such a remembrance, such a memorial, form a very prominent part of our whole service. And it is undoubted that some of the Fathers and some of our English divines have held and taught that it is allowable to speak of the commemoration of a sacrifice as a commemorative sacrifice. But in many cases they have explained that by the one they meant the other. Thus Bishop Andrews speaks of "the commemorative sacrifice" and "the commemoration there made of the sacrifice" as identical in meaning.[1]

The question we would ask is this: At a time when

[1] See Meyrick, Doctrine of the Holy Communion, p. 57.

many are undoubtedly teaching a doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice which can hardly be distinguished from the Mass, is it wise, is it fair to those who come after us, to use a phrase, admittedly inexact, which serves as a cover for error? How is it possible for plain folk to remember that when we speak of the Holy Communion as a Commemorative Sacrifice, we mean a service in which we *actually offer* a spiritual sacrifice of thanksgiving, while we *commemorate* the one great propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord. Is not confusion inevitable? Is it not under cover of the confusion thus caused that thousands of our children are being taught that there is in the Holy Communion an offering of a sacrifice to God, commemorative, but yet so far propitiatory as to be an effectual means of blessing apart from actual communion? The sacrament which Christ ordained is being neglected by reason of a sacrifice which He never even named. It is to this we must trace the increasing encouragement given to Children's Eucharists, and to non-communicating attendance, both of which are foreign to the conception of our service.

Two significant changes, made in 1552, and confirmed in 1662.

It was to guard against this doctrine, and against the revival of these practices, that our Reformers omitted in 1552 the words "mass" and "altar," which are now found in no formulary of our Church which is sanctioned by spiritual authority. It was to guard against this doctrine and these practices that they ventured on that most radical change in the Prayer of Consecration which marked the revision of 1552. No other explanation has been attempted, and that change was confirmed and approved in all subsequent revisions. Let us recall what that change was.

In 1549[1] the "Prayer of Oblation" or "Memorial" was most closely associated with the consecration of the bread and wine. The words themselves[2] are capable of a simple and Scriptural meaning; the position of the prayer did not *necessarily* convey any wrong suggestion. Both might have been justified, as has been the case in the Scotch and American Churches. Yet in 1552 the words of "Memorial" were wholly omitted, and that portion of the prayer was bodily removed to the Post-Communion service, lest any idea that some unique sacrifice was being offered by the priest should still remain. That Prayer of Oblation still stands in our service, but it is not used till after the elements have been received, and it is made to emphasise no material offering of the bread and wine, but the spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of "ourselves, our souls and bodies, as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice." In this sense only the Holy Communion is a Eucharistic sacrifice, as taught by the Church of England.

The Communion of Saints.

Lastly, *The Lord's Supper is the truest and most comprehensive expression of "The Communion of Saints."* That article of our Creed has had a very varied interpretation, and its admitted vagueness has led many to despair of finding in it much practical value. Now the Lord's Supper suggests three things which are essential to realising this

[1] It is so now in the Scotch and American Offices.

[2] "We Thy humble servants *do celebrate, and make* here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy gifts, *the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make.*" We still use the rest of the prayer as the first Prayer after Communion, following the Lord's Prayer.

Communion, and which at least rescue it from being an empty, vague, misleading term. (1) There must be the common participation in Jesus Christ. Communion (*κοινωνία*) is joint-partaking of some common thing. All society is bound together by the possession of some common interests and aims. Whenever men find that they belong to the same school or university, or share the same tastes, or possess the same privileges, then at once fellowship asserts itself and starts into action.

Just so it is the fact that true Christians have in common the greatest of all possessions, that has made the Communion of Saints the grandest society that the world has ever seen. It reaches beyond the limits of any visible Church, of any body of Christians; it binds into one body, whatever may be their differences, it unites in one aim, all who feed upon Christ by faith with thanksgiving. Now the outward seal, the visible representation of that Communion, is the partaking of the one bread and of the one cup, the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

(2) The Communion of Saints involves not only this joint-partaking of the benefits of Christ's Passion, but also by consequence the living fellowship with Him as our Risen and Ascended Lord. And the Holy Communion which does not live itself over and over again in the daily life of the communicant must have failed of its purpose. The Christian who makes frequent attendance at Holy Communion a substitute for direct and continued spiritual feeding in other means of grace, is making a great and fatal mistake. The time of Holy Communion is to be the summing up, the concentrating with peculiar force into one

special act of worship, what ought to mark the even tenor of our daily life.

Now to such as strive to live a life of fellowship with Christ, practising His presence in every path of duty, the Lord's Supper is the visible pledge and earnest that such fellowship is no mere dream-land fancy, but is one of the most blessed realities of the Communion of Saints.

3. The Communion of Saints means fellowship with one another, as well as with the Lord. It is the sacrament of unselfishness. It compels us to remember one who pleased not Himself, and it constrains us to do likewise. In the Holy Communion we find the inspiration for all social philanthropy. We, who are joint-partakers of Christ, cannot see our brother have need, and "shut up our bowels of compassion from him." "To do good and to communicate[1]" is one primary lesson of this sacrament, even as it is one of the first duties which mark the Communion of Saints.

Here, too, we may find the constraining impulse for all missionary work. This sacrament reminds us of the native Christians of many lands, who Sunday by Sunday, and all through the Sunday, kneel at the same holy table, eat the same holy food, and are with us one body, as with us they break the one bread.

"As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the sound of praise away."

And, finally, such a celebration as it were rehearses the boundless purpose which the Communion of Saints will

[1] Κοινωνεῖν.

one day fulfil. For the fellowship of Holy Communion is only bounded by the utmost limits of mankind. It embraces all of every age and of every clime who have lived in God's faith and fear, whether resting in paradise or still "militant here in earth," and it can never attain its fulness until that "great multitude which no man can number" gathers round the throne, and when God's elect, complete from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," shall have their "perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul" in His eternal kingdom.

This is no new thought. In the earliest uninspired account of the Eucharist we find it thus expressed in words which may well bring this essay to a close:—

"As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom; for Thine is the glory, and the power, through Jesus Christ for ever and ever." [1]

[1] Didachè, ch. 9.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

By the Rev. FREDERICK MEYRICK, M.A.

The mass and the confessional.

THERE are two subjects which among the controversies that have been rife during the last year have specially roused the apprehensions and stirred the hearts of Englishmen who love their Church and thank God for the Reformation of the sixteenth century—the doctrine of the mass, and the practice of the confessional. That there should be any that desire to restore these two things, and to plead that they have not been rejected by the Church of England, has created a thrill—first of surprise, then of indignation on the part of some, and of deep sorrow on the part of others—

> "Pudet haec opprobria nobis
> Et dici potuisse et non potuisse refelli!"

The doctrine and the practice run in curiously parallel lines. Both claim the sanction of Holy Scripture—falsely; both are corruptions, the one of primitive doctrine, the other of primitive practice. Both of them originated about the same period and to a great degree from the same cause

—namely, the irruption of the barbarians into the Roman Empire in the sixth and seventh centuries, and the inability of the Church to maintain a hold over them except by making concessions to their ignorance and coarseness, which, while they materialised doctrine, might subject the unlettered crowd to the authority of their teachers. Both of them won their way gradually to acceptance by the heads of the Latin Church; both of them (for the sacrifice of the mass is involved in transubstantiation) were first authorised in the same year and at the same council—the Lateran Council of 1215, under Innocent III.; and both of them received further and final sanction in the sixteenth century at the Council of Trent.

Confession and absolution not correlative.

Confession and absolution are not necessarily connected. Confession can and does take place apart from absolution, as may be seen in Wesleyan class-meetings, when penitent souls are recounting their experiences and their falls. Absolution need not be preceded by a detailed enumeration of sins, as may be seen in the absolutions following upon merely general confessions in the public services of the Church. What does Holy Scripture say of these two things, which it nowhere unites together—(1) Confession, (2) Absolution?

Scriptural doctrine of confession.

1. Full as Scripture is of the necessity of confession to God, there is not a word ordering or suggesting confession to man, except in the case of one that has trespassed against his neighbour, and is bound to acknowledge his trespass to him. We may look through the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles of St Paul, the Epistles of St Peter, St John, and St Jude, and the book of the Reve-

lation, and we shall find no such injunction. The only passage which may be understood in this sense is James v. 16: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This verse may be understood simply to command a man who has wronged another to make acknowledgment of his fault to him, in which case it has no bearing on the question before us. But suppose that it does convey a precept to Christians not to shrink from confessing their sins before their brethren, in order that their repentance may be helped by a brother's sympathy and prayer, *that* might sanction the Wesleyan practice and might justify the Roman formula which has come down from primitive times, whereby the priest and the congregation each confess their sinfulness to the other, and beg the other's prayers that they may be forgiven; and each pray God that He will pardon the other. But St James's precept has nothing to do with the confessional, with a tribunal of penance, with a pardon bestowed by or through man.

Scriptural doctrine of absolution.

2. There is, then, no Scriptural warrant for confession with a view to absolution, unless absolution means simply prayer for God's forgiveness of another. What does Scripture say of absolution apart from confession? Two texts are quoted. The first is Matt. xviii. 18, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Here it has not been sufficiently remarked that, be the meaning of binding and loosing what it may, it is things, not persons (whatsoever things, not whomsoever), that are bound and loosed; nor has the force of the expression

Matt. xviii. 18 authorises making canons and rules of conduct.

"binding and loosing" been adequately apprehended. Lightfoot, in his 'Horæ Hebraicæ,' on St Matt. xvi. 19, has proved by amplest evidence that these words, as understood at the time when our Lord used them, meant simply "to forbid" (Heb. *âsar*) and "to permit" (Heb. *hittir*). By this text, then, our Lord gave authority to His apostles to make rules of conduct for the members of His future Church, enjoining what things might be done by them and what might not be done, and He promised that their action in this respect should receive divine sanction. And yet not even *that* unconditionally, for in the same breath He promised that whatever any two of them agreed on earth to ask of God should be done for them by His Father that was in heaven. In both cases the condition is understood, that the rules and prayers were such as God approved. This text, then, must be put aside as not bearing on the doctrine or practice of absolution, which has to do with persons, not with things.[1]

John xx. 23 authorises (1) admission into the Church; (2) excommunication; (3) readmission.

There remains the other text, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are re-

[1] "In treating this matter in the light of Scripture, we ought to remember that one of the texts often cited in support of it, that about 'binding' and 'loosing' in the 16th and 18th chapters of St Matthew, has primarily nothing to do with what we call 'absolution.' The power given [promised] first to St Peter, and then to the apostles in connection with His doctrine about the Church, is a power concerning things, not persons. It is a power to 'bind' or 'prohibit' some things, and to 'loose' or 'permit' others—a power given by Christ to His Church, as a society, of making rules on the initiation of its chief pastors. On this text we may rest the validity of the canonical rules of the Church, but not the ministry of penitence to persons."—Bishop John Wordsworth, Letter to the Clergy of the Diocese of Salisbury, p. 49. Longmans, 1898.

tained" (John xx. 23). These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ on the evening of the day of the Resurrection, on the first occasion of His appearing to "the disciples" as a body. We know from the account of the two disciples who went to Emmaus, to whom our Lord had shown Himself earlier in the day, that the blow of Christ's death had for the time shattered the band of believers and reduced it to a crowd of disheartened individuals, bound together only by the memory of their Master. This was their first gathering, which probably many of them thought would be the last. While they were in this despondent state of mind, Christ appeared among them, and assured them that all was not over, but in a sense only beginning. They were now to go forth, sent by Christ, as Christ had been sent by the Father, and to give them confidence of this He anticipated the full gift of Pentecost by a partial communication to them of the Holy Spirit, who, as a flash of remembrance would call to their mind, was to take the place of Christ Himself as their ruler; and then there immediately followed the words, "Whose soever sins," &c. By receiving at such a moment their mission from Christ, and by the gift, though only as yet an earnest, of the Spirit, a flood of illumination would have poured into their minds, and they would have seen that it was their work to gather together a Church of those that were to be saved out of an ungodly world lying in wickedness. Those whom they admitted into the sacred fellowship became God's pardoned children; those whom they rejected continued "children of wrath," "still in their sins." The effectual sign of transference from the kingdom of darkness to the

kingdom of light was to be, as they were taught by Christ Himself (Mark xvi. 16), baptism, instituted by Him as the door through which, on their repentance and faith, men were to pass to forgiveness as the adopted children of God, whose sins were pardoned for Christ's sake. How were they to know who were fit to be admitted and who not? Christ promised that of this they should be constituted judges (by the help of the Holy Spirit they would be able to judge aright), so that their act in this respect should be His act, whether by granting the privilege of admission into the Church they remitted a man's sins, or by refusing it they retained them. No doubt, as before, an unexpressed condition accompanies the promise —namely, that in each particular case they were acting by the Spirit's impulse; but this being granted, the words give to the officiating minister Christ's authority to admit persons into the Church by granting them "baptism for the remission of sins,"[1] or to reject them, and so keep them out of covenant with God, and therefore still in their sins. This is the primary force and meaning of the words of the text, and with this signification they are still addressed to every presbyter on his ordination, who is thus officially enabled to admit catechumens into Christ's kingdom by baptism, or to keep them outside of it in the world

[1] "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and *be baptised* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*. . . . And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptised: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts ii. 38-41). Is there not here a conscious reference by St Peter to the promise of John xx. 23?

lying in wickedness. In the first case he remits, through Christ's ordinance; in the second, he retains their sins. But since the greater includes the less, as the words gave permission to admit the worthy and to refuse admission to the unworthy, so they authorised the rejection of one that had been admitted on his being proved unworthy, and the readmission of him on proof of his repentance; that is, they not only sanctioned, and sanction, the ministry of those rites of the Church, through the faithful use of which remission is commonly vouchsafed by God, but they also sanction excommunication and subsequent reconciliation. They do *not* sanction the practice of auricular confession, with which they have no connection whatever, nor absolution as ordinarily understood.

That the above exposition of our Lord's words accords with the patristic view of their meaning may be seen by the following commentary upon them by St Cyril of Alexandria, A.D. 412-444: "Spiritual persons remit or retain sins in two ways; for they either call to baptism those who have been tested and are approved for the gravity of their life and their faith, and prohibit and keep back from the divine grace those who have not yet become worthy of it; or, in the second way, they inflict penalties on the children of the Church who have fallen into sin, and remit them when they repent, as St Paul delivered over the incestuous Corinthian for the destruction of the flesh, and again admitted him that he might not be swallowed up by too great grief." [1]

[1] On John xx. 23. Hence the Nicene, "One baptism for the remission of sins," that is, for admission into the Church and fellowship of those that are pardoned for Christ's sake and made the children of God.

Sins are an offence (1) to God; (2) to the Church.

As the confessional is not found in Holy Scripture, so it had no existence as a disciplinary system in the primitive Church. It is an axiom of reason that pardon must proceed from the party that is wronged. God is wronged by sin, therefore He can forgive it. The Church is wronged, as well as God, by the sins of its members, because they give offence and scandal to the faithful, who feel themselves contaminated by fellowship with unrepentant sinners; therefore she has the right of pardoning those sins, not in so far as they were offences against God, but in so far as they are offences against her as an organised society. Sins that do not bear this character, such as those committed by men not belonging to her body, she may and ought to warn people against, and she ought to pray for the pardon of the offenders; but she cannot inflict penalties upon those that are guilty, and she has nothing to do with pardoning them.

The Church may punish and pardon offences against herself.

The penitential discipline of the early Church was framed upon the principle of self-defence, combined with charity. Did a man *outside her pale* commit a sin of idolatry, she might warn him and pray for him, but she did not presume to put herself in God's place to punish or pardon him. In like manner, if a man who *was* a member of her body were guilty of idolatry, she did not venture to inflict upon him a penalty for the offence that he had thus committed towards God, nor did she presume to pardon it. But by the same act he had been guilty of a trespass against her. He had broken her laws as well as God's laws, and had offended the consciences of the brethren. This offence fell under her cognisance, and for it she inflicted the only penalty which she was capable of inflicting—a spiritual penalty, consisting

of a suspension of the privilege of communion with her until the fault was purged by the offender's penitence, helped by her prayers; and the faithful were assured that they were not, by condoning the transgression and communicating with the transgressor, "having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," instead of "reproving them" (Eph. v. 11).[1]

The public penitential discipline of the early Church.

How did this work in daily life? Thus. A man had committed an act of idolatry. Perhaps he came and acknowledged his fault to the bishop and clergy; perhaps he did not. If he did not, the bishop and clergy made investigation into the facts. Whether he confessed or, on scandal arising, was convicted by other evidence, the bishop and clergy, "having knowledge thereof, called him and advertised him that in any wise he presumed not to come to the Lord's Table until he had openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended, that the congregation might thereby be satisfied which before were offended." [2]

But it was not every sin that gave offence to the congregation. Each member of the congregation was conscious of sins of infirmity in his own case, and accustomed to see them in others. By them they were not scandalised, and therefore those guilty of them had not to be restrained from joining the community in prayer and sacraments, or to confess them except to Him who was rightfully offended by them.

What sins had to be confessed to the Church, and for

[1] See Socrates' argument, founded on this text, against doing away with the office of Penitentiary Presbyter (Hist. Eccles., v. 19).

[2] Rubric preceding the Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, adapted.

What sins had to be confessed.

what period those that were guilty of them had to be refused communion with their brethren, were not exactly defined. The three great sins of idolatry, murder, and adultery were always required to be confessed before the sinner could be readmitted to communion. To these were added sometimes fraud, sometimes blasphemy, or some other grievous sin. Gregory Nyssen, brother of St Basil (A.D. 373-395), has left us a canonical letter, in which he lays it down that there are nine sins which debar from communion, and must be confessed to the Church—apostasy, for which the penalty was refusal of communion for life, or for nine years, according to circumstances; witchcraft, with the same penalties; adultery, for which communion was refused for eighteen years; fornication, for nine years; murder, for twenty-seven years, or possibly for fifteen years; homicide, for nine years; robbery with violence, for from fifteen to twenty-seven years; robbery of graves, for nine years; sacrilege, to be treated with rather less severity than murder. No other sins but these nine had to be confessed, though Gregory would gladly have added covetousness to the list.

To whom and for what purpose they were confessed.

Even in the case of these greater sins, what do we mean by confession? Was it auricular confession to an individual priest with a view to absolution from him? No, it was a confession made to the bishop and clergy assembled, who had to pass judgment whether the offender's sin was such as to require public confession, and if so, whether it was safe for him to confess it publicly, whereby it might come to the ears of the public prosecutor, and whether it was of a nature likely, if confessed, to defile the consciences

of the more innocent members of the congregation. Unless the bishops and clergy determined that the offence could not for these reasons be safely made public, the offender had to declare his offence and his sorrow for it to the whole congregation, after which the length of his penance was declared by the bishop. In some Churches the burden of deciding these cases by the clerical staff in general became so heavy that one of the body was selected for the duty, to whom the name of Penitentiary Presbyter (ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς μετανοίας πρεσβύτερος) was given. To him the confession on the part of the penitent, or proofs of guilt in respect to the impenitent, were exhibited instead of to the assembled clerical body; but this again was not done for the sake of absolution at his hands, but that he might instruct the penitent as to their public penances, and inform the Church as to the guilt of the impenitent.

A Penitentiary Presbyter.

In the case of those who confessed their fault and prayed to be restored to communion, the Church, with merciful intent though apparent severity, pointed out the way in which they might recover "the peace of the Church." They must undergo a public penance—not at all to atone for their sins, or to satisfy the justice of God (as has been dreamed in later times), but to make manifest the reality of their sorrow before the offended congregation, to deepen their own penitence, and to receive the benefit of the Church's prayers for their forgiveness at God's hands. A very elaborate system of dealing with such penitents was instituted: they were divided into four classes, called respectively — (1) προσκλαίοντες, *flentes*, or weepers; (2) ἀκροώμενοι, *audientes*, or hearers; (3) ὑποπίπτοντες, *sub-*

The four orders of penitents.

strati, or kneelers; (4) συνιστάμενοι, *consistentes*, or non-communicating attendants. The "weepers" were candidates for penance—that is, they stood outside the church and besought the members of the congregation, as they went in and out, to permit them to enter on a course of public penitence. When their petition had been granted, and they had in a loud voice, heard by all the congregation, confessed their sin, they were placed in the class of "hearers," so called because they were admitted within the door of the church to hear the Holy Scriptures read and the sermon preached, but were dismissed before the prayers began. After a time they were advanced to the class of "kneelers," who were allowed a little further into the church, and were permitted to kneel there while prayers were said for them. Finally, they joined the class of "non-communicating attendants," who were allowed to join with the faithful in the general prayers and to witness the communion service, but not to partake of the sacred elements.[1]

Restoration to the peace of the Church.

When the repentant offender had passed through the four orders of penitents, he was readmitted to the peace of the Church, the congregation being now satisfied of the reality of his repentance by the fruits of it which they had witnessed. No form of absolution was used which could possibly lead the most ignorant to think that God's forgiveness for the sin was thus granted. The form used can hardly be called an absolution at all. It was simply

Form of absolution or reconciliation.

[1] It is singular to see men voluntarily, though unconsciously, reducing themselves to the rank of penitents under the impression that they are performing a devout action, suitable to advanced Christians.

an imposition of hands by the bishop and clergy, including deacons, accompanied by prayer. And this same form had been used when the transgressor had *first* been admitted to penance, and it had been employed over him *every day* that he remained in the order or class of "kneelers." Imposition of hands did not mean the transmission of a gift from God, by the hands of the imponent, to those on whom he laid his hands; but it was a ceremony which symbolised that prayer was being made to God specially for them. "What else is imposition of hands," says St Augustine, "but prayer over the man?"[1] An elaborate and marked form of absolution might have been misinterpreted to claim a power of pardoning sin, but no such formula was used—nothing more than prayer and the same imposition of hands that had been used at the beginning of the penance, and throughout the greater part of the time that it lasted.

Lesser sins pardoned on the offender's prayer.

Will it be supposed that though the clergy did not venture to forgive the greater sins, such as those specified by Gregory Nyssen, yet they felt themselves enabled by their commission, contained in the words, "Whosesoever sins ye remit," to pardon the lesser sins, and that these lesser sins were confessed to them for this purpose? We have conclusive evidence to the contrary. In the case of the greater and lesser sins alike, they considered the sin to be forgiven by God alone, on the sinner's repentance and prayer, the only difference being that in the case of the greater sins the Church demanded to see the signs or fruits of repentance, in order that the congregation might be assured that the repentance was genuine,

[1] De Bapt., iii. 16.

before readmitting the offender to communion, and so granting him her "peace." Sins of infirmity, and all sins which were of a lower degree than those for which public penance had to be done, were considered to be pardoned by the mere act of the offender's prayer for pardon. St Augustine dwells again and again on private prayer as the medicine and cure of the sins of daily life. One or two passages will be sufficient to quote. "For the short and light sins of every day, without which no one lives, it is enough for the faithful to use prayer every day. This prayer altogether does away with slight and daily sins."[1] "Baptism was appointed for the remission of all sorts of sin; prayer for such light sins as we all commit. What prayer? 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' The cleansing of baptism can be had only once; we are cleansed by prayer every day. Public penitents have committed some great crime, and therefore they are obliged to do penance; if their sins had been light, daily prayer would have been sufficient to do away with them."[2] "For sins from which no man is free in this life, He appointed a medicine of daily use in the prayer which He taught us, in which we say, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'"[3]

Private confession in the early Church.

Was there, then, no private confession in the early Church? There was (1) that which must always exist in a body of sympathetic religious men and women—the interchange of spiritual experiences, which often takes the form of one telling to another the faults that

[1] Enchir., 71. [2] De Symbol. ad Catech., i. 7.
[3] De Fide et Operibus, 26.

he is conscious of having committed. There was (2) what is equally certain to exist, the consultation, by those who were heavy laden or perplexed, of such as were regarded specially men of God; and these would naturally be most often found in the ministers of the Word and sacraments.[1] The object of the first of these "confessions" would be spiritual sympathy; of the second, consolation, counsel, and reassurance. But in neither case would the confession, if so it could be called, have been followed by absolution. There was (3) the confession which those guilty of great and scandalous crimes were bound to make to the assembled bishops and clergy, or to the Penitentiary Presbyter representing them, before admission to the privilege of public penitence. The object of this confession was, as we have seen, that the penitents might be instructed whether the crimes were such as it was expedient to confess publicly before the congregation, considering the danger that might accrue therefrom to the penitent, and harm that might be done to innocent members of the congregation. But its object was not absolution at the hands of the priest to whom the confession was made; nor was such absolution ever given. These were the only confessions known in the early Church except the general confessions and absolutions of the Liturgy. There was, therefore, no private confession to man for the purpose of obtaining absolution for sins committed against God, either before the public

[1] To this occasional practice Origen refers in a passage often quoted as favourable to private confession, though the confession which he advises is with a view to a possible public confession. (In Psalm xxxvii.)

penitential discipline was instituted or during the whole period that it prevailed. How long was that period?

Breaking down of the public penitential system.

1. Abolition of the office of Penitentiary.

The first blow that was struck at its prevalence in the East was at the end of the fourth century. At that time a scandal arose at Constantinople, owing to a lady who had been adjudged a penitent by the Penitentiary Presbyter, and as such had been admitted to the public penance, confessing a new scandalous sin that she had committed during the very time of the penance. Great offence was given, and a presbyter named Eudæmon went to the bishop, Nectarius, and advised him to do away with the office of Penitentiary, and to allow each person to judge for himself whether and when he should return to communion after doing wrong. Eudæmon's advice caused as much excitement as the scandal created by the lady. The Church will be "having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" if she admits a grievous sinner to the Lord's table without having first been assured of his repentance, said some, and the historian Socrates thought that their contention was right. The other party argued that the individual conscience must be trusted. Nectarius took Eudæmon's advice, and from that time the public penitential discipline began to be less uniformly observed in the East.

St Chrysostom on confession to God alone.

It does not seem that any serious effort was made at this juncture to substitute private confession to a priest for the public confession to the congregation. The time for that had not yet come. Still, there may have been a tendency in that direction in some minds, and this is perhaps the reason why St Chrysostom, who succeeded Nectarius on

the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, dwells with such emphasis and decision on confession to God being alone necessary or desirable. "Why art thou ashamed and blush to confess thy sins? Dost thou tell them to a man, that he should reproach thee? Dost thou confess them to thy fellow-servant, that he should divulge them? Thou showest thy wound to Him who is thy Lord, thy Protector, thy Physician, the Lover of mankind. . . . He says to thee, I do not compel thee to go into the midst of a theatre and have many witnesses. Tell thy sins in private to Me alone, that I may heal thy wound and deliver thee from thy pain."[1] "I beseech you, make your confessions continually to God. For I do not bring thee into a theatre of thy fellow-servants, neither do I constrain thee to discover thy sins unto men. Unfold thy conscience before God, and show Him thy wounds, and ask of Him the right medicine. Show them to Him who will not reproach thee but heal thee. If thou art silent about them, still He knows all. Tell Him, that you, not He, may benefit by your doing so."[2] "He who has done these things, if he would use the assistance of conscience for his need, and hasten to confess his sin, and show his sore to the Physician who heals and reproaches not, and accept His medicine, and converse with Him alone, none knowing, and tell all exactly, he shall soon amend his falls; for confession of what we have done wrong effaces faults."[3] In his work 'De Pœnitentia,' he dwells gratefully on the many ways of penitence that

[1] De Lazaro, Concio iv. tom. i. p. 757, ed. Ben. Paris, 1712.
[2] Hom. v. De Incomprehens. Dei natura, tom. i. p. 490.
[3] Hom. xx. in Gen., tom. iv. p. 175.

God permits, and enumerates them as (1) Confession to God, (2) tears, (3) humility, (4) almsgiving; but in his exhaustive list not one word does he say of confession to a priest or absolution by him. "Hast thou sinned? Say to God, I have sinned. I do not require anything else of thee but that."[1] "Thou hast a second way of penitence, to be sorry for thy sin. Hast thou sinned? Be sorry, and thou effacest thy sin."[1] "Thou hast a third way of penitence (I am telling you many ways, so as to make your salvation easy by the variety of the ways). What is the third way? Humility. Be humble, and thou hast loosed the knot of thy sins."[1] "Let us go on to state a fourth way of penitence: I speak of almsgiving, the queen of virtues."[2] Throughout the treatise, as if in anticipation of the corrupt practice that was to come, he insists on the claims of conscience in man, and contemplates no confession except to God alone. "Paul says, 'Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.' He did not uncover the wound; he did not bring the accusation before the assembly of spectators; he did not require witnesses of the fault committed. Make your judgment, and the examination into your sins, within, in your own conscience, no one being present except the all-seeing God; and considering all your life, submit your sins to the judgment of your mind. Reform your faults, and so with a clean conscience come to the holy table and partake of the holy sacrifice."[3] As many as twenty or

[1] Hom. ii. tom. ii. pp. 287, 290, 292. [2] Hom. iii. p. 295.
[3] Hom. vi. p. 326.

thirty passages might be quoted from St Chrysostom's works in which he insists that confession is to be made to God alone.[1]

2. Rescript of Pope Leo I. First step towards private confession.

In the West the way was prepared for the downfall of the public penitential discipline, and the substitution for it of the private confessional, by Pope Leo I. (A.D. 440-461). Taking advantage of the objection which undoubtedly lies against making public such crimes as might bring civil punishment on their perpetrator, he "directed," in a letter to the bishops of Campania, that a statement of the crimes of penitents should no longer be made to the congregation. The chief use of such a proceeding he considered to be the obtaining the Church's prayers, and he held that that end was attained by the prayers of the priests. "It suffices that the guilt of the conscience be laid open to the priests alone in confession, . . . for that confession suffices which is made first to God, then to the priest also, who draws near to pray for the sins of the penitent." Here, however, it will be noted that the priest is still regarded as the representative, not of God, but of the Christian people, and that his function is still, not the granting of God's pardon, but the offering of prayer to God as the organ of the congregation, which prayer had up to that time been offered by the whole congregation. Nevertheless, the "direction," so far as it went, was a heavy blow to the old system of public penitence, and it encouraged the penitent to be satisfied

[1] Many of these passages are given by Hooker, 'Eccl. Pol.,' VI. iv. 16; Bingham, xviii. 3; Daillé, iii. 14; iv. 25. 'Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Antiquities,' *s.v.* "Exomologesis."

with confession to a priest instead of to the congregation. After a time the priest easily slid into the position of being the representative, not of the congregation, but of God; and the penitent learned to seek from him, not only his prayers as the Church's minister, not only his assurance of God's forgiveness, but the divine pardon itself.

3. The irruption of the barbarians.

And now an event occurred which had almost as important effects upon the history of the Church as upon the world. In the fifth and following centuries came the falling back of the Roman Empire and the irruption of the barbarians. Roman soldiers and Roman magistrates disappeared, but the Church still bravely held its ground, and entered on the task of gathering the wild tribes into the fold of Christ. She succeeded, but her success cost her something. The wild northern barbarians knew nothing of the traditional doctrines and expositions with which the Roman world had been familiar. Down to this time it had been well known that the text, "This is My body," was to be understood spiritually; that the text, "Whosesoever sins ye remit," meant that Christ's ministers were authorised by the Master to admit men into the kingdom of grace, or to keep them out of it, and to cast them out from it if necessary, and to readmit them on their proving themselves worthy. The unlettered new converts accepted the first text carnally, and the second grossly. The clergy had enough to do to keep a hold on them in any way, and they were well content to allow them in misunderstandings which would at least confirm them in subjection to themselves, who were the representatives not only of religion,

but of civilisation.[1] It was hopeless to make the fierce soldiery submit to public penance, but they might come to their priests for forgiveness when their conscience became alarmed over any unusual act of outrage.

Private confession tolerated for the next six hundred years.

From this time the doctrine which culminated in 1215 in transubstantiation, and the practice which at the same date and at the same moment became sanctioned as compulsory and habitual confession and absolution, gradually spread through Western Christendom. When we reach Archbishop Theodore's Penitential, A.D. 668, we find that it was more usual to confess to a priest, but it was considered sufficient to confess to God (I. xii. 7). The question is left still open by a canon of the Second Council of Châlons, A.D. 813, which says, "Some say they ought to confess their sins to God only, and some think that they ought to be confessed to the priests: both of which are practised in the Holy Church, not without great fruits. . . . The confession made to God purges sin; that made to the priests teaches in what way those sins should be purged" (Canon xxxiii.) And even Gratian's *Decretum*, in the middle of the twelfth century, leaves the advisableness of confession to a priest to the judgment of the individual.[2]

Compulsory auricular confession first enjoined in 1215.

It was not till the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, under Innocent III., that the double yoke of the doctrine of transubstantiation and of the practice of habitual confession to a priest was laid on the Western Church's neck.

[1] "The ecclesiastics must have been almost more than men, certainly far beyond their time, to have resisted the temptation of what would seem innocent or beneficent fraud, to overcome or to control the ignorant barbarian."—Milman, Latin Christianity, iii. 2, p. 292.

[2] De Pœnit., i. 89.

History disproves a divinely appointed tribunal of penitence.

Glancing back at this historical review, we have a right to ask, How is it possible that Christ should have established a tribunal of penitence in the priest—to which if He did establish it, we are, for that reason alone, all bound to have recourse—when the practice of private confession is unknown to Holy Scripture, and was unknown to the Church for at least five hundred years, after which time it began sporadically and occasionally, among the most ignorant and unlettered of the members of the Church, winning its way to no more than tolerance during the next five hundred years, and first enjoined, as habitually and necessarily to be exercised, by a council which was the mouthpiece of the haughtiest of the Popes, in the thirteenth century after the Christian era? The bare facts of history put out of court the claims made for habitual and organised confession to be an institution appertaining to the Christian religion as such, though it may accord well enough with some corrupt developments of it. And further, we may ask, Does not the fact that for twelve hundred years no absolutions from sins were known, except in the form of prayer to God that He would forgive, make it impossible to think that during that long period the belief existed that the priest was delegated to grant God's forgiveness to the sinner? To pray to God to forgive a transgressor is one thing; to grant him God's forgiveness is another thing.

The institution of the tribunal of the confessional as part of the system of the Western Church dates from the year 1215 A.D., and the author of it was not the Lord Jesus Christ but Pope Innocent III. It exists now as it was

appointed by him, with only such additional rules for conducting it as have been laid down by a series of casuists who have succeeded one the other from medieval times onward,—rules which were satirised by all the wit and moral indignation of Pascal in his 'Provincial Letters,' but have now been approved and adopted in the main by the 'Moral Theology' of St Alfonso de' Liguori, who in all questions of morals is the appointed doctor of the modern Roman Church.

Penitence defined as consisting of—1. Attrition.

Penitence, as this system has been called, is described as consisting of an imperfect contrition, designated attrition, confession, and satisfaction. Attrition differs from contrition in its motive. Contrition is sorrow for sin arising from the love of God, and from grief at having offended Him. But no one with the Word of God before him, whether in the Old Testament or in the New, could dare to deny that wherever there was contrition on the part of man there was full forgiveness on the part of God; that though the transgressor's sins were as scarlet, they were on contrition made white as wool. Where, then, was the need of confession to man, and absolution by man, with the purpose of obtaining that pardon which had been already granted by God? According to the old theory of penance, confession *was* of use, for the sake of obtaining the prayers of the brethren, and for the assurance of the faithful, that the sinner was repentant and worthy to be received back into communion; but this was not the object of confession and absolution according to the new theory. Absolution would now be doing over again what had already been done by contrition. So for contrition was substituted attrition—

that is, distress of mind following upon sin through fear of its punishment in this world or the next. This, it is supposed, with confession and penance, followed by absolution, will have the same effect as contrition without them, provided, it is added, that the sinner has felt the fear not more than a day or two before his confession. Hence it follows that if we have contrition, we do not require confession to man with a view to pardon from God; and that if we have, or have lately had, attrition, we may by means of confession obtain God's pardon without loving Him at all. Can anything be more contrary to the dictates of our spiritual instincts or to the teaching of Holy Scripture?

2. "Confession."

"Confession," which is represented as the second part of "penitence," is now, and since 1215, a different thing from the confession of the early Church, except in name; *that* was demanded only in case of grievous sins represented by apostasy, murder, and adultery; and when made, it was to be made before the whole congregation, in order that the penitent might obtain the benefit of the congregation's prayers, and the people might be induced to forgive the transgressor for the scandal that he had caused; and it could only be permitted once in a man's life. Now every grave sin, and every act to which the casuists thought proper to affix the name of grave sin,—and these two things are very far from coinciding,—must be confessed after an earnest ransacking of the memory;[1] and wherever the con-

[1] "To all that have fallen into sin after baptism an entire confession of their sins is necessary by divine law. . . . All mortal sins that can be remembered, after searching out the hiding-places of the mind and after diligent thought, must be discovered to the priest; and besides, the circumstances must be laid open to him which change the character of the sin. All this

fessor thinks that modesty has caused reticence, he is authorised to make the minutest inquiries, and to insist on direct answers on matters on which no modest girl would speak to her mother, nor a modest wife to her husband. It differs also in having to be made frequently—the more frequently, it would seem, the better — instead of once only in the course of the whole life.

The manner, too, of modern confession differs from that formerly employed as much as the matter. In the early Church the man stood up before the assembled congregation and said, "I apostatised from the faith;" "I am a murderer;" "I have been guilty of adultery"—no more; no particulars; no questions. And then the bishop publicly assigned him his place in this or that class of penitents; or if the nature of the crime was such as to endanger the penitent's life or the congregation's wellbeing, if publicly declared, he was silently placed by the bishop among the penitents. But now the man—far more often the woman—whispers into the priest's ears his or her sins, and the priest makes his interrogations and listens to the replies, not in the public audience of the Church, but in the secrecy of the confessional box, or a retired part of the church, or the vestry, or wherever it may be. Occasionally a Michelet raises a maddened cry of protest;[1] occasionally an Achilli lifts a corner of the veil which ordinarily obscures the public vision.[2] We do not wish to look

is secretly deposited in the ears of the priest alone" (Devoti, Inst. Canon., ii. 69, 70). Advocates of confession in the English Church go beyond their Roman prototypes, by requiring all wrong feelings, words, and acts, whether grave or not, to be confessed on pain of sacrilege.

[1] 'Priests, Women, and Families.' [2] Achilli *v.* Newman.

behind it, but we cannot help seeing that this part of the discipline is one that bad men and weak men, and all but saintly men, may at least easily abuse. Then why introduce, in the face of such a danger, what Christ did not institute, nor the primitive Church practise? I do not doubt that it has been done in many cases with the best of motives, but without taking into consideration the counterbalancing evils.

3. Satisfaction.

Satisfaction—the third part of penitence—under the new system differs altogether from the satisfaction sought and obtained under the old system of discipline. *There* satisfaction meant (1) that if the penitent's offences "were not only against God but also against his neighbours, then he should reconcile himself unto them, being ready to make restitution and satisfaction according to the uttermost of his powers for all injuries and wrongs done by him to any other";[1] and (2) that by the open declaration of his repentance and amendment "the congregation might thereby be satisfied which before were offended."[1] But now the word means "penal satisfaction made to God, to satisfy the Divine Justice, which requires the injury done to it to be repaired."[2] In other words, the penances imposed by the priest at his discretion have to be performed by the penitent as "an atonement, punishment, satisfaction for sin committed."[3] According to this theory, a man's guilt is done away with by absolution and the penalty of hell is escaped, but God must still be propitiated and His

[1] Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper (Church of England).

[2] Liguori, Theol. Mor., vi. 4, 1.

[3] Fasting is thus described by the present Roman priest at Norwich.

justice satisfied by the sinner's suffering on earth, or if he does not live long enough for the purpose, by his continuing to suffer in Purgatory—a place brought into existence by medieval reasoning chiefly with the object of enabling sinners to complete their satisfactions, which their penances began but did not finish. While, then, the satisfaction demanded in the primitive and Anglican Churches is a righteous and necessary accompaniment of repentance, the satisfaction required by the confessional is an unspiritual unevangelical effort on the part of the sinner to atone for his own sins by pains which he offers to God as a recompense to Him for his transgressions. And these pains, the unreformed Church teaches him, must be endured to the uttermost unless the superabundant merits of some one else be handed over to him by an indulgence, to make up the defective tale of his own satisfying works and sufferings.

Absolution changes its character.

Absolution also, like the three processes that preceded it, changes all but its name. It had been a prayer to God for a man's pardon and a licence to him to return to the communion of the Church. Now it is the actual concession, not of the Church's pardon for offences committed against her, but of God's pardon for offences against Him. The precatory form ("May God pardon you") is exchanged for the indicative ("I absolve thee") as the common rule.[1]

Of this system of confession, looked at as a whole, we

[1] "Sins must be remitted by the priests themselves as vicars of Christ, and it is not enough that they pray to God that He would remit them" (Liguori, vi. 4, 430). Yet there was no form but the precatory for twelve hundred years.

Working of the confessional.

may say that it is a plan for a man's deliverance from eternal punishment without the love of God (for attrition is counted sufficient), and for his deliverance from temporal punishment by his performing certain enjoined painful acts, the merit of which will satisfy God's justice for his misdeeds, or if he has not completed that satisfaction, by undergoing further suffering in the next world, unless he has been provident enough, by wearing a scapular or some such easy manner, to supply himself with a way of escape at the hour of death; and should he have been so negligent as not to have done even that, he may still leave a sufficient sum of money to purchase deliverance for himself; or—a still more easy way — a friend may obtain for him an indulgence applicable to the dead. We may then designate the confessional, as enjoined by the Fourth Lateran Council, a device for escaping the punishment due to sin in this world and the next, without godly repentance, on the condition of making confession to a priest and either performing an appointed penance or taking some prudent but very simple precautions against the chance of the penance not having been performed.

Evils of habitual confession.

Nor is this, grave as it is, the only mischief. There are other evils attached to habitual confession which affect the penitent, the priest, the nation, and the family.

1. To the penitent. (*a*) Weakening of conscience.

Of the evils affecting the penitent the most serious is the weakening of the authority of conscience. Every one who has either looked into his own heart or has studied the science of psychology or of ethics, knows that just so far as conscience is appealed to and followed, it speaks with authority and decision. A man asks himself, "Is this

right?" Conscience replies "Yes" or "No." Every time that he acts upon the dictates of his conscience he strengthens its authority over himself, and conscience speaks more clearly and magisterially on the next occasion. At length it becomes a perfect guide, infallible except where confused or perverted by superstition.[1] On the other hand, if conscience is not listened to and obeyed, its voice becomes weaker and weaker, till at length it is not heard at all, and the man is left without a guide within himself in respect to right and wrong. Now conscience, while it is a very powerful, is also a very tender and delicate instrument to deal with. If, when it says "Do this," the man answers, "I am not so sure; I will get better advice," conscience will bear it once or twice without resenting it; but if the man comes to act thus habitually, conscience retires from the strife with an alien authority, and when at last despairingly appealed to, utters no voice, gives no sign. The man has become conscienceless, a piece of mechanism, a staff in the hands of another, and

[1] "Let any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, ask himself, Is this I am going about right, or is it wrong? Is it good, or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue by almost any fair man in almost any circumstances. Neither do there appear any cases which look like exceptions to this, but those of superstition and partiality to ourselves. Superstition may perhaps be somewhat of an exception, but partiality to ourselves is not, this being dishonesty. . . . Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide—the guide assigned us by the Author of our nature. It therefore belongs to our condition of being, it is our duty to walk in that path and follow this guide without looking about to see whether we may not possibly forsake them with impunity."—Butler, Sermon III., Upon Human Nature.

is ready for any crime suggested to him by the ruler that has usurped the place of conscience, without pity, without compunction, without remonstrance. Such is the tendency of a man's—still more of a woman's—habitually taking the confessor's judgment or the judgment of any "approved doctor" in place of his own. And such results we see follow. The Jesuits are men whose personal conscience has been sacrificed by submitting it to the external rule exercised by another. When matured, they will say anything or do anything required of them without the least caring whether it be true or false, right or wrong. The murders committed by the members of secret societies are accounted for by their consciences having been submitted to the conscience of the directors of the society. How but thus can we account for a Spanish Inquisitor—a Dominic, a Torquemada, an Ximenes, who were undoubtedly devout men? And who that has had the opportunity of looking on has not seen men and women guilty of the most cruel acts, which, if conscience had not been put to sleep, they could never have done, because ordered by a power which has usurped the place of God's voice within them? They have committed moral suicide; they are no longer men and women, but parts of a machine for the direction of which they are not responsible.

(*b*) Weakening of modesty.

Another effect on the habitual penitent is the weakening of modesty and the blunting of delicacy which follows from putting into words feelings which by that very means take form and shape and consistency, even when no questions are asked. I pass this point by.

Another effect is the weakening or confusing of the sense of truthfulness. If a man is asked by his confessor whether he has committed a sin which he regards as venial, or a mortal sin which he has confessed to another priest, the highest authority on these matters authorises him to say that he has not done it at all.[1] If a nun is asked by the bishop in the very act of visitation whether an abuse exists in her monastery, she is by the same authority "excused from telling the truth," if telling it has a tendency to harm her, or if she knows it as a secret, or if she thinks it will be no good to tell it, or if only a few know about it, or if she thinks it has been corrected.[2] Would the man who had gone to a priest to whom he was unknown and confessed a sin to him, and then denied to his own confessor that he had committed it, or would the nun who had answered No to the inquiries of the bishop in the case mentioned, have inflicted no wounds on their sense of truthfulness nor seared what remained of their conscience? The man or woman who confesses to the all-seeing God cannot play these tricks upon themselves or with Him.

(*c*) Weakening of truthfulness.

Another effect is the emboldening a man to commit a crime from a reasonable expectation of being freed from its guilt by a process which he can readily anticipate. And this does not only affect the coarse and unlettered assassin, who goes on his quest with a light heart owing to that comforting assurance. It is a subtle danger which will make a man of a different stamp persist in doing wrong from a secret or even acknowledged consciousness that he

(*d*) Emboldening in predetermined crime.

[1] Liguori, iv. 157. [2] Ibid., v. 57.

will to-morrow do a bitter penance, by his confessor's order, to make amends for to-day's indulgence.[1] Nay, it encourages simple souls, who have to observe a rule of frequent confession, to do something counted a little wrong, such as infringing the regulations issued for fasting in Lent, in order to have something to confess, which at times they have quite a difficulty in finding.

(*e*) Scrupulosity.

Without dwelling on other points, such as the scrupulosity often engendered by searching into every corner and cranny of the heart for matter for confession, I pass to the

2. Evils to the confessor.

injury done by the confessional to the priest; and here too I shall only mention one or two of its effects. One is

(*a*) Arrogance.

spiritual arrogance. The Fourth Lateran Council, by its two dogmas of transubstantiation and the confessional, changed the character and idea of the priesthood. Henceforth "by means of the words of consecration" he could "cause the Body and Blood of Christ to become present under the appearances of bread and wine," and he had "the office and power of effecting the real objective Presence on the altar of the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and thereby offering HIM up in sacrifice," as Cardinal Vaughan has claimed that Roman priests do now. And he could judicially forgive sins also, sitting in the tribunal of penitence, not as the representative of the people, to whom confession was made according to the public penitential system which formerly prevailed, but as the vicegerent of God. No wonder that he should entertain high ideas of

[1] "I will go in. I had made up my mind before I came. Oh, I shall do penance enough for it; you need not be afraid of that. I shall suffer enough for it."—The Puritans, p. 266.

his office, which will colour all his behaviour.[1] Let him be surrounded with a bevy of adoring penitents who regard him as the embodiment of perfection, and it will be strange if he does not think so highly of himself as to demand unquestioning obedience, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred will be effusively and officiously rendered; but if any one shows sympathy for views other than those of the master, although those views have nothing whatever to do with the matter of the confession, from a dear daughter she will at once become as a heathen woman and a publican. The confessor's penitents must be his disciples, or cease to be his penitents.[2] Is he not "as God" to them?

(*b*) Weakening of truthfulness.

A keen sense of the loveliness and sanctity of truth is likely to be dulled by the confessional in the confessor, as well as in the penitent, by the perplexing situation to which he must often be reduced. The Abbé Gaume, following Thomas Aquinas and a long series of casuists, lays it down that the confessor knows what he learns in confession "as God," not "as man." Consequently, "as man he may swear with a clear conscience that he knows not what he knows

[1] "What is a priest?" says a French manual used in Retreats. "He is at once God and man" ('Le Manrèze du Prêtre'). "What is a priest?" writes a German writer of Lippstadt. "He is a man that represents God, a man invested with the whole plenitude of the power to God. Go to make confession to an angel or to the Virgin Mary. Will they absolve you? No. The Virgin cannot transform the Host into her divine Son. If there were two hundred angels here they could not absolve you. A priest, poor as he may be, can do so. He can say to you, Go in peace; I pardon you."—See 'Foreign Church Chronicle,' March 1898.

[2] The writer has known two instances of this arrogance in the English Church.

only as God."[1] I am far from saying that this question is free from difficulty. The clergyman is bound to keep safe any secret committed to him like the lawyer and the doctor, and he must be ready, if need be, to suffer penalties for his silence. But when confession is not habitual, such cases will be rare; when it is habitual, not one man here and there will be perplexed, but the whole body of the clergy will be in the custom of passing off on themselves such sophisms as the above, and of saying frequently that what is not is, and what is, is not. Straightforward truthfulness will thus have to be exchanged for diplomatic sleight.

(c) Danger of inordinate affection.

There is another point, applicable both to confessors and penitents, which I must not pass by, though in dealing with it my right hand is tied behind my back, and I touch upon it all unwillingly. I will only say that all good writers on the subject earnestly warn against the danger, if confession be frequent, of spiritual affection sliding into a different feeling almost unconsciously to those concerned;[2] that St Alfonso de' Liguori thought it necessary to insert into his 'Moral Theology' a dissertation on the subject of solicitation; that a series of popes, beginning with Paul IV. in 1561, issued bulls ordering the denunciation of priests who made use of the confessional as a means of temptation; and that at the very moment when every Protestant in Spain was being hunted out to be burnt in an *auto-da-fé*, "the Inquisition having decreed that every woman who had been tempted in the confessional to sin should denounce the author of the temptation to the Holy Office, so many

[1] Pusey's Manual for Confessors, p. 402.

[2] Liguori, Praxis Confessarii, 119.

denunciations were made that it was found necessary to hush up the matter."[1] The following testimony of a priest now officiating in France in the Roman Church is such as can be quoted: "Il est vrai que la femme se présente au prêtre sous une forme bien vivante, très attrayante, plus seduisante encore au confessional, avec ses confidences, ses abandons, ses faiblesses mêmes, dont elle parle d'un façon si touchant, on dirait presque si volontiers. Qui de nous n'a succombé? Bien rares sont les exceptions. Je reconnais qu'il y a des temperaments de la vertu desquels je ne doute pas, mais combien? Helas! j'ai confessé beaucoup de prêtres. J'en sais trop long."[2] If that snare is avoided, is there no danger to the priest's purity of heart from the records poured constantly into his ears? Liguori justifies priests in continuing to hear certain confessions although they are thereby put into the proximate occasion of sinning, and very often sin.[3] Such experiences cannot but have their effect.

(*d*) Danger to purity of mind.

The evil done to a nation by the confessional is too plain to escape the notice of keen-sighted statesmen. Lord Salisbury has designated it as a loss of virility.[4] This result follows when the Lateran discipline is in general accepted by the nation, as it is in Spain and South America by the highest and the lowest, though not by the middle class. But

3. Evils to the nation.

(*a*) Loss of virility.

[1] History of the Church of Spain, p. 390. Wells Gardner, 1892.

[2] Le Chrétien Français, February 1898.

[3] Theol. Mor., vi. 4. 456; Prax. Confess., 69.

[4] "We know that besides its being unfavourable to what we believe to be Christian truth, in its result it has been injurious to the moral independence and virility of the nation to an extent to which probably it has been given to no other institution to affect the character of mankind."—Speech in the House of Lords, July 14, 1873.

to other nations still calling themselves Roman Catholic this discipline is intolerable; and thus we have the phenomenon presented by France, where the laymen, refusing to submit to the yoke of Innocent III., have, as a rule, either cast off the profession of Christianity or declare themselves "non-practising" Christians. Out of the 38 millions of Frenchmen how many *men* besides priests and a comparatively few countrymen practise habitual confession? If not to be counted on the fingers, would they amount to hundreds? And those who do not practise it are, by the theory of the confessional, excluded from Holy Communion. As the nation is made up of its individual members, we see that the confessional produces either bigotry, want of independence, and loss of power of initiation, or else unbelief and rejection of a religion which has allowed such a practice to be made compulsory. Do we think the moral and religious state of Spain and the South American republics or of France is superior to that of Great Britain?

(*b*) Dominance of unpatriotic interests.

From another point of view the confessional is fatal to the peace and wellbeing of nations. The ruler of a country, be he Emperor, King, President, or Prime Minister, is bound to look first to the welfare of the country, and ordinarily he does so, except when led astray by his personal interests or predilections. But supposing that he has a confessor always at hand to whom he is bound to submit his judgment in moral and spiritual questions, it will not be the welfare of the country but of a Church, and if that Church has a centre outside the country, of a foreign Church and Power which boasts of making itself an *imperium in imperio*, that he will put in the first place. It may be said

that in political questions he will not be affected by a confessor's opinion. But who shall say what political questions stand by themselves unconnected with morals and religion? Which of the great domestic questions which in our lifetime have stirred the heart of Englishmen could be so designated? No man can keep them apart. Louis XIV. was no weak thing to be made an instrument in the hands of another, and yet he could not stand up against his confessors. They did not prevent his licentious life, but the three great political crimes of his reign—the dragonnades, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the persecution of the Port-Royalists—were committed by their influence and that of his confessor-ruled wife when he had become "devout." At the last moment of his life he strove to throw the responsibility off himself on them; but he could not undo the mischief wrought on his country, from which it is still suffering. Isabel of Castile abhorred the Inquisition, and would not admit it into her dominions until her confessor told her that it was her duty to do so, and it was under strong pressure from him that, against her own instincts, she solicited the papal bull establishing it in 1478. James II. might have had a different fate if it had not been for Father Petre and the other papal ecclesiastics to whom he deferred. Rulers and subjects alike suffer from Innocent III.'s institution.

4. Evils to the family. Overthrow of home life.

The overthrow of family life from the same cause is even more pitiable. What is it that makes home home to the English man and the English woman? It is the absence of the director. When the director is present there is an alien power in the household, standing between the husband and

the wife, the father and the daughter. He has probably no influence, or next to none, on the master of the house. But the influence over the wife grows. She gets accustomed to look to the director for counsel on the highest, and by degrees on all, subjects. May she do this? is not asked of the husband, but of the priest. Who can give such good advice about the children? Has one of them a vocation for the priesthood? If the husband has his own views and takes his own line, there comes to be a conspiracy of wife, children, and (behind the scenes) the director against him. The husband, father, and master is no longer the head of the house, around which the thoughts and feelings of the family are grouped. An extraneous mind is the ruling power. He who ought to be the rightful authority feels that he is so no longer; there is a shadow between him and his; confidence is not given, and therefore he does not give it. He feels himself boycotted. He knows not why, or if he does know, his religious principles, if he approves of the confessional, or his contemptuous toleration and pride, if otherwise, forbid him to apply a remedy; he acquiesces, and betakes himself to the café, the *table d'hôte*, and the club, leaving the priest the undisputed ruler of his women-folk, and contenting himself with bitter sarcasm and angry neglect of all religious observance. Meantime the 'Moral Theology,' which through the director has become the family conscience, authorises wife, children, and servants in a course of conduct which makes any healing of the schism impossible.[1] M. Bourrier, who has lately resigned his

[1] Wife, children, and servants may all steal (*furari*, *surripere*) different amounts, according to a tariff. Some part of the wife's pilferings are to be

ministry in the Roman Church in France, writes: "Ce que le prête prend de la femme au confessional, c'est le meilleur d'elle même: son cœur trop souvent et toujours sa conscience. Il faut convenir que les maris imbéciles qui se contentent du reste sont fort complaisants. Et nous ne parlons ici que des confesseurs vertueux; que dire des autres? Voila pourquoi Saint François de Sales était si difficile avec sa Philothée pour le choix d'un confesseur: 'Choisez-le entre mille, dit Aviler, et moi je vous dis entre dix mille.' Telle était sa maxime."[1] Is not *this* the reason why "home" is so much more Teutonic than Latin, that the Teutonic races have repudiated habitual confession, and the Latin races retain it for their women, if not for men?

The teaching of the Church of England.

We now come to the teaching of the Church of England on the subject. At the time of the Reformation the Lateran system was in full force. Every one was bound by ecclesiastical law to communicate at Easter and to go to confession before communion, and habitual confession was regarded as the normal practice of religious men and women. "In the three hundred years that elapsed between the Lateran Council and the Reformation," says Bishop John Wordsworth, "the system had been found not to work well. It rendered communion infrequent; it fostered a coarse and material conception of sin; it checked the

preferably spent on alms and offerings, that God may not punish the husband; his children may swear at him, so that it is behind his back; and the servants may compensate themselves for accepting what they regard as too low wages. Such is the teaching of the highest authority on morals, which governs all confessionals in the Roman Church (Liguori, Theol. Mor., iv. 540-543, 334, 521-524).

[1] Le Chrétien Français, February 1898.

development of a sense of responsibility; it encouraged priestly pretentiousness."[1] These and other evils connected with the practice, some of which are enumerated above, the Church of England resolved to free herself from at the Reformation. Accordingly she broke the double yoke of the Lateran Council. She repudiated transubstantiation, and she restored to the general body of believers the liberty of confessing their sins to God and God alone, which Christians had enjoyed down to A.D. 1215, and which St Chrysostom and St Augustine had so eloquently vindicated.

The Commination Service.

To see how she dealt with the subject we should turn to the Commination Service, issued in the First Prayer-book, of 1549. We see there expressed a wistful longing to return, according to the genius of the English Reformation, to the practice of the earliest days, but with it a recognition that though it were "much to be wished" that the "godly discipline of the primitive Church"—that is, the public confession before the congregation of great and scandalous crimes—"might be restored," yet that that was now impossible. What should she do? Should she content herself with merely doing away with the compulsory character of the medieval system and leave the practice of confession still a part of the regular Christian life? or should she boldly trust her children to the guidance of their God-given conscience, and teach them to make their confessions to God and God alone? Here was the place for her to show her mind. After her note of regret at the primitive practice being gone beyond recall, she might

[1] Letter, &c.

have said, "Instead whereof it is thought good" that, though the practice is no longer enforced as a condition of communicating, you should use private confession if you seek to advance in holiness of life. But what did she say? "Instead whereof it is thought good" that you should hear God's denunciation of unrepented sins read in your ears, followed by an earnest call to repentance. She instructs and appeals to the Christian man's conscience, and leaves the teaching of Scripture and the exhortations of the Church to do their work. Having repudiated the Lateran discipline, and acknowledging that she could not restore the primitive discipline, she has recourse not to private confession and absolution, habitual though not compulsory, but to free confession to Almighty God by the contrite soul.

The general confessions and absolutions.

In the same Prayer-book, that of 1549, the general confession and absolution (composed by Cranmer in 1548) were introduced into the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, and in a passage to be quoted presently they are referred to as being all that was required, without "auricular and secret confession to a priest." In 1552 the same principle was acted on for the Morning and Evening Prayer, and the general confession and absolution were prefixed to the services, which had previously been without them, with the view of discouraging private confession and giving all that a repentant Christian required in the public offices of the Church. Henceforth none that were spiritually sound in health were to be encouraged or invited, far less compelled, to use confession to man, or to seek for pardon except directly from God through Jesus Christ.

Auricular confession no part of the normal practice of a Christian.

The normal life of the Christian was thus provided for. Was he living in the fear and love of God, let him be thankful for the past and vigilant for the future, praying God daily for the pardon of the daily sins of infirmity. Did he fall into grave sin, let him confess it to God in his secret chamber, let him recall it with shame as he joined in the general confessions which he made with the rest of the brethren in God's house; and let him not doubt that on his contrition he was freely forgiven by his Father who was in heaven.

Two exceptional cases of distressed souls.

But there were two exceptional cases to be met. Suppose that a man who had hitherto led a peaceful and religious life were on a sudden to fall into some great sin—say, that in fear of death he had denied his Lord. It would be quite possible, even likely, that when the crisis was past he would be overwhelmed with horror at his deed, and be unable to persuade himself that God could forgive him.

1. Before Holy Communion.

As the Lord's Supper is the joyous feast of those who already feel themselves in loving communion with their Father as His pardoned children, he would feel himself excluded from it, and rightly, until he could approach it with a quiet mind and full confidence in God's mercy. What should be done for him and others like him? The Church told them that their right course was to go to their clergyman or some other learned minister of God's Word, to tell him why they were forced to excommunicate themselves, and to receive from him that assurance of God's free forgiveness which they could not by themselves attain to, and so to obtain the benefits of absolution in their readmission, with a quiet mind, to the Holy Communion. In the

first reformed Prayer-book, of 1549, the wording was somewhat different from that which we have at present. It ran as follows: "And if there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in anything, lacking comfort or counsel, let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned priest, taught in the law of God, and confess and open his sin and grief secretly, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us (as of ministers of God and of His Church) he may receive comfort and absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness: requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to a priest; nor those also which do think needful and convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with those that are satisfied with their humble confession to God and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the side of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; whereas he hath no warrant of God's Word to the same."

This counsel of toleration in respect to those of scrupulous or distressed conscience was natural when universal confession to a priest, which had prevailed for three hundred years, was first declared unnecessary. But when the Prayer-book of 1549, which was tentative and provisional in its character, was superseded three years afterwards in 1552, and ten years afterwards in 1559, by a book repre-

senting the more fully formed convictions of the Church, the latter part of the exhortation, which might have seemed too favourable to "auricular and secret confession to a priest," was omitted, and for "absolution" was substituted "the benefit of absolution," which in the early Church was regarded to be readmission to communion and the peace of the Church.[1]

2. Before death.

There was yet another exceptional case to deal with besides that of the man who did not feel sufficiently at peace with God to partake of the Lord's Supper. This was the case of the dying sinner. What was to be done with and for him? If he could feel assured of God's forgiveness on his contrition, all was well; but if his conscience was sore troubled after all his efforts and demanded relief, what then? Common charity would answer that it was the part of God's minister to move him to make a clean breast of it before he died, and so to receive from him, when made acquainted with the facts, the assurance, which his own heart could not give him, of God's pardon, solemnly pronounced by the mouth of His servant.[2]

In these two cases, then—the case of the man who desires but fears to come to the Lord's Table, because he cannot persuade himself of God's forgiveness, and the case of

[1] "The sentence of ministerial absolution hath two effects: touching sin, it only *declareth* us free from the guiltiness thereof and restored unto God's favour; but concerning right in sacred and divine mysteries, . . . the Church, upon our apparent repentance, *truly restoreth* our liberty, looseth the chains wherewith we were tied," &c.—Hooker, Eccl. Pol., vi. 6, 5.

[2] "What is, then, the force of absolution? Doth it really take away sin, or but ascertain us of God's most gracious and merciful pardon? The latter of which two is our assertion, the former theirs" (the Papists).—Hooker, Eccl. Pol., vi. 6, 4.

the man who, for the same reason, fears to die—in these two cases, and those only, the Church of England approves of private confession, followed by absolution, to give assurance of God's mercy and pardon. It is plain that this is not habitual confession nor judicial absolution, and that the evils connected with habitual confession could not follow from the exceptional action which a presbyter would probably not have to perform more than once or twice, if so often, in the course of his whole ministry.

No judicial absolution from sins.

But it may be asked, Does not the last of these instances prove that the Church does sanction the belief that the priest can judicially pardon sin? It does not prove it. Supposing that the form of absolution in the Visitation Service were in any way judicial, it would only be so to this extent, that the priest, being assured of the man's repentance, and consequent forgiveness by God, judged and judicially declared that he might therefore be restored to the peace of the Church and the Communion of the Lord's Table. But it does not go so far as that. The priest is acting only ministerially, and, owing to his inability to see the heart, conditionally. If the man is contrite, he declares him, to his comfort, absolved. If he is not, the Master's judgment overrules the servant's ministry. Had the absolution been intended for a judicial and unconditional pardon of sin, it would not have been immediately followed by a prayer for pardon and forgiveness, which, on that hypothesis, would have been conveyed the moment before.

The indicative form of absolu-

It is true that the form of the absolution is here indicative, "I absolve thee," instead of precatory, "Pardon and

tion substituted for the precatory.

deliver you"; and this is perhaps the only case where the English Church appears to have adopted a medieval for a primitive form. For it is certain that the indicative form was never used in respect to sins towards God till the twelfth century, being first authoritatively ordered by a Council held in London in 1268, and next by a Council of Nismes in 1284. "Whence also," says Martene, "William of Paris in 1248 writes, 'And the confessor does not pronounce in the style of the judge, "We absolve thee," "We do not condemn thee"; but let him make a prayer over him that God may give him absolution and remission and the grace of sanctification.' With this agree all the ancient manuscript ritual books of both Churches, in which various and pious *prayers* for the reconciliation of penitents are read."[1] If anywhere, previous to this time, an indicative form is to be found, it was used by the bishop (only) when a declaration was to be made by authority of restoration to the communion of the Church. Such a form, for this limited purpose—that is, an absolution from Church censures, not from sin—is first found in the Pontifical doubtfully attributed to Egbert, A.D. 767. It is probable that the Reformers, in selecting the direct form, desired to indicate that it was restoration to communion that was meant to be effected. The use of the form is not imperative on a clergyman, even when he uses the Visitation Service, which he seldom does. For the rubric originally ran, "After which confession the priest shall absolve him after this *form*," but it has been changed into "After which confession the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily

[1] De ant. eccl. ritibus, i. 6, 5.

desire it) after this *sort*," which leaves the exact wording of the absolution optional. Nor is the indicative form authorised, except in the case of a very sick man with a troubled conscience; for though permission was given in 1549 to use it in other cases, the clause granting that permission was struck out in 1552.

Teaching of the Homilies, positive and negative.

In her book of Homilies the Church of England sets forth her doctrine, both positively and negatively, with greater authority than any one of her divines can enjoy, and more consecutively, and therefore more clearly, than in her offices. Positively, she teaches, "There be four parts of repentance"—(1) "the first is the contrition of the heart;" (2) "the second is an unfeigned confession and acknowledging of our sins unto God;" (3) "the third part of repentance is faith, whereby we do apprehend and take hold upon the promises of God, touching the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins, which promises are sealed up unto us with the death and blood-shedding of His Son Jesus Christ;" (4) "the fourth is an amendment of life, or a new life, and bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance." Negatively (1) she knows no such thing as attrition; (2) "Whereas the adversaries go about to wrest this place (James v. 16), for to maintain their auricular confession withal, they are greatly deceived themselves, and do shamefully deceive others; for if this text ought to be understood of auricular confession, then the priests are as much bound to confess themselves to the lay people as the lay people are bound to confess themselves to them; and if to pray is to absolve, then the laity by this place hath as great authority to absolve

the priests as the priests have to absolve the laity. . . . What need we to tell forth our sins into the ear of the priest, sith that they be already taken away? . . . It is most evident and plain that this auricular confession hath not his warrant of God's Word. . . . Moreover, these were St Augustin's words, 'What have I to do with men, that they should hear my confession as though they were able to heal my diseases?' . . . Let us with fear and trembling, and with a true contrite heart, use that kind of confession that God doth command in His Word; and then doubtless, as He is faithful and righteous, He will forgive us our sins and make us clean from all wickedness. I do not say but that if any do find himself troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor, or to some other godly learned man, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive at their hands the comfortable salve of God's Word; but it is against the true Christian liberty that any man should be bound to the numbering of his sins, as it hath been used heretofore, in the time of blindness and ignorance;" (3) "They that teach repentance without a lively faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ, do teach none other but Judas' repentance, as all the Schoolmen do, which do only allow these three parts of repentance: the contrition of the heart, the confession of the mouth, and the satisfaction of the works; but all these things we find in Judas' repentance;" (4) "Hereby do we learn what is the satisfaction that God doth require of us, which is, that we cease from evil and do good, and if we have done any man wrong, to make him true amends

to the uttermost of our power. This was commonly the penance which Christ enjoined sinners, 'Go thy way, and sin no more.'"[1]

Summary.

The sum of what has been maintained above is as follows:—

1. Holy Scripture contains no injunction for confession of sins to man, to be followed by absolution.

2. The text on binding and loosing (Matt. xviii. 18) authorises the rulers and ministers of the Church which was about to be set up, to make regulations or canons for the conduct of its members; and the text, "Whosesoever sins ye remit," &c. (John xx. 23), authorises them to admit men into the Church by baptism, expel them from it by excommunication, and readmit them into it by reconciliation or absolution. The commission granted in the first of these texts was acted upon by the apostles in the Council of Jerusalem when they laid down regulations under which the Gentiles were to be received. The commission granted by the second text was acted upon by St Peter when he baptised three thousand souls on the day of Pentecost "for the remission of sins," and by St Paul when he excluded from the Church, and again when he readmitted into it, the incestuous Corinthian.

3. In accordance with the second commission the first Christians went forth and admitted disciples in all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; and they instituted an elaborate system of excommunication and restoration to communion for the greater sins, such as idolatry, murder, and adultery,

[1] Homily of Repentance and true Reconciliation with God, Part ii.

of which public confession had to be made to the offended congregation. There was at this time no organised system of private confession and absolution.

4. The first step towards auricular confession was made by Pope Leo I., A.D. 440-461. Gradually, for reasons specified, private confession began to grow up in the sixth and seventh centuries, and became tolerated, though only tolerated, during the next six hundred years.

5. In 1215 confession to a priest was imposed as a necessity on all men and women belonging to the Western Church by the same Council that sanctioned transubstantiation; the priest being now regarded, not, as at first and in the time of Leo I., the representative of the people, but the vicegerent of God.

6. According to the system introduced in 1215, the "matter" of confession or penitence is defined to be imperfect contrition or attrition, confession, and satisfaction, and its "form" to be an indicative absolution, all four of these processes having a signification given them which was unknown in purer ages, and an indicative absolution for sins, having been never used till the twelfth century.

7. The confessional, thus instituted by Innocent III., necessarily produced grave evils to the penitent, to the confessor, to the nation, to the family—weakening conscience, modesty, truthfulness, purity, virility, patriotism, home-life; emboldening some in crime, tending to produce scrupulosity in others, creating a sacerdotal arrogance, and leading men to believe that they could escape punishment for their sins in this world and the next without love of God or sorrow for offending Him.

8. In the sixteenth century it was rejected by the Church of England, confession to God alone, whether in the secret chamber or in the public confessions of the Church, being substituted for it in the ordinary and normal life of the Christian; the exceptional case of a man unable to make his peace with God before the Holy Communion or before death being met by a permission, in those two instances, to open his grief to God's minister and receive from him the benefit of absolution by the ministry of God's Holy Word.

Present state of the question.

This is the law of the Church at the present moment. How, then, are we to account for the systematic efforts that have been made for the restoration of the discipline of habitual, organised, and even compulsory, confession to a priest? In many cases it has arisen from a genuine belief that individuals would be benefited by it, and their spiritual life deepened. Those who maintain this opinion are men of much simplicity and no wide grasp of mind, who, looking only to individual cases, do not see how vastly the evils of the system that they are helping to introduce outweigh those which they deplore. These men may be enlightened by further experience and insight. It cannot, however, be doubted that this is not the only class of men engaged in the task of restoring the pre-Reformation penitential system. It is a sorrowful thing to acknowledge, but we cannot help allowing that there are men who, with their eyes open, are attempting to bring back doctrines and practices of the unreformed Church, from the doctrine of the mass and the papal supremacy to the shape of a surplice and the colour of a stole; and these men are introducing the confessional (which where they are able they make compulsory) because

it is an integral part of the Roman system. These men are disloyal to the Church of which they are members, and we must say to them that we are not prepared to acquiesce in the compromise or subterfuge that they aim at—namely, that the compulsory character of confession should alone be prohibited or not recognised by the Church's law. We know that the evil of the system is not only in its being compulsory, but in its being habitual, organised, and regarded as a part of the normal Christian's daily life, or as a means of attaining to a higher religious eminence, often by the exercise of an asceticism which we condemn as inhuman, unspiritual, and dishonouring to God. We know that that system proved itself a failure, and more than a failure, and proves itself so still where it prevails. The Church of England deliberately rejected it three centuries and a half ago, and she firmly rejects it now.

Those who would pursue the subject further are referred to Morinus, De Pœnitentia; Daillé, De Auriculari Confessione; Suicer, Thesaurus, *s.v.* "Exomologesis"; Hooker, Eccl. Pol., bk. vi.; Thorndike, Laws of the Church; Jeremy Taylor, Dissuasive from Popery, part ii.; Bingham, Antiquities, bk. xviii.; Note to Tertullian's De Pœnitentia in Oxf. Lib. of Fathers; Reichel, The History and Claims of the Confessional; Smith and Cheetham's Dictionary of Antiquities, *s.v.* "Exomologesis."

TESTS OF TRUE RELIGION.

By the Rev. HANDLEY C. G. MOULE, D.D.

"LET us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." I would fain take this apostolic word for the regulative motto of this paper. My theme may sound a little severe and exigent, as if a poor mortal were about to go round among his neighbours and brothers trying to apply to lives and persons some touchstone of his own devising. Far different is my thought and purpose. I have lived long enough to learn something like repugnance to the work of judging persons even by their avowed principles; for life is always illustrating the paradox that the person can in many respects stand strangely aloof from the system he asserts or favours. And if I come to deal, by way of test, with conflicting or contrasted systems, my only purpose is to draw persons near together in faith and sympathy around what may prove to be a central fire of truth. Purpose of the Essay.

In any case, may no sentence be written here which

shall fail in fairness, candour, and goodwill. If failure there should be, I shall much need forgiveness.

By way of proviso, let me be understood to mean by true Religion, of course, true Christianity, in theory and in practice. The tests of such Christianity will mean, in effect, its characteristics, its main marks and differences, as beside its rivals or counterfeits,—the principles which lie at its root, and the distinctive issues of them in the religious life.

Our tests must be supplied by Holy Scripture.

Such tests, to be sure of their validity, we must seek primarily in the primal documents of Christianity, the Holy Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament. Of course, our reason and our conscience must enter fully into the matter, and with open eyes. Only it is to the Holy Book that we must go with them, if we want articulate information about the mind of Him who not only founded Christianity but is its Foundation—yea, is Christianity itself. Practically speaking, we shall find such articulate answers to our questions nowhere else, except in the form of reports and echoes from the Scriptures. In the Scriptures we shall find them.

The test of attitude towards Scripture.

This announcement of a Biblical inquiry may at once suggest to us a first and momentous test of true Religion, and one upon which it is timely to lay stress. Many a thoughtful and religious man, amidst our importunate controversies, literary as well as religious, realises but imperfectly, I think, the majestic position of the Bible in the mind and teaching of our Lord and His apostles, and also in the view of the Church next after the first days. It is not too much to say that for our Lord Jesus

Christ Himself a main test of true religion was, *How readest thou?* For Him, in the sacred experiences of His own true Humanity, as well as in His infallible instruction of others, "the Scriptures of the Prophets" were nothing less than "a lamp to His feet and a light to His path." That path took Him now to the wilderness to be tempted; now to the garden, for the last immeasurable trial of His will to suffer, now upwards into the eternal summer sunshine of His resurrection. And everywhere the written oracles were His rule, His stay, His joy, His theme. "It is written;" "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" "Thus it is written; thus it behoved the Christ to suffer." As we go forward in time, and the Christian Church develops to our sight, we find no "tradition" more primitive and more general, more certainly held *semper, ubique, ab omnibus,* than the tradition that the written documents of revelation convey to us the divine Voice upon faith and duty as nothing else quite conveys it. A very moderate acquaintance with the Christian literature of the first two or three centuries is quite enough to illustrate this simple but important position.

Examples of primitive deference to Scripture.

Out of a great wealth of possible examples[1] I may select two from the third century, both connected with the name of Cyprian, whom I cite the rather as he is the type of the early teachers and administrators who most actively developed the idea of Church life and authority. We possess in his works an account of a Council held at Carthage under

[1] For a careful and useful conspectus see Goode's 'Divine Rule' (ed. 1856), vol. iii.

his presidency in 256. It recites in order the opinions on the matter in hand delivered by the eighty-five bishops assembled. Of these quite thirty-three contain either particular or general references to the Scriptures ("the holy and adorable Scriptures," says one pastor; "the deifical Scriptures," says another) as the true teachers of the faith; while no speaker even suggests any other "divine informant" upon it. And Cyprian himself, about the same time, reasoning with Stephen of Rome, declines a reference to custom, however old, where it is not authorised by Scripture. "If this thing is commanded in the Gospel, or contained in the Epistles and Acts of the Apostles, be such divine and holy tradition observed. . . . Custom without truth is the antiquity of error."

Sometimes this loyalty to Scripture comes out in noticeable ways in patristic interpretations of Scripture. So Œcumenius, following the Alexandrian Clement, interprets the "many witnesses" to whom St Paul refers in 2 Tim. ii. 2 as "the Law and the Prophets." No doubt it is an improbable explanation. Far more likely is the view which sees in those "witnesses," "through whom," supported by whom, Timothy heard the apostle's instructions, the presbyters and others present at Timothy's ordination. But that leaves the phenomenon of the ancient expositor's view only the more interesting as an index to primitive opinion upon Scripture. To him, even the ordination charge of the great apostle would have needed, for its support, the attestation of the written Word; at least, that support would have been important to it.

On the whole, I venture to affirm that among the tests

of a true Christianity, prominent among them, far-reaching in its reference, must be placed the question, What is the attitude towards Holy Scripture of such and such a system or ideal? Is it an attitude of cordial and congenial reverence and confidence? Is the abundant use of Scripture favoured and promoted by the system, alike for the teachers and for the body of the faithful? In regard of public ministration, is large prominence given in it, not to preaching only, but to such preaching as perpetually founds itself upon Scripture, and aims above all things to make its pages, as they stand, more articulate to the mind and soul? Is the manifest purpose "not to have the Bible on our side, but to be upon the side of the Bible"? Is the Christianity of the private Christian such that he finds himself, as by an instinct, gravitating to the Bible as his true oracle of God, on faith, character, and duty? Is he prompted by his religious system, not indeed (God forbid!) to approach the Bible lightly, self-confidently, asserting petulantly his own judgment upon its meaning to the neglect of other and more collective judgments, yet to approach it *directly*, asking his unseen Lord to speak direct to him through the written Word?[1] Is it natural to his cast of religious thought to make it, as the Psalmist did (cxix. 24), "the men of his counsel"? Does he find it, as Athanasius assures us that it is, "self-sufficient" (*αὐτάρκης*) as our informant upon the things of God—self-sufficient, not indeed to the self-sufficient reader, but to the believing reader who goes in humility to the Word itself? Is it natural to the man's Christianity to desire

The working of this test considered.

[1] Compare the exhortations of the First Homily on this subject.

to be supremely led, taught, toned, moulded, by those august yet sympathetic companions, the Holy Scriptures, "read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested," in direct and untrammelled intercourse? Or, on the other hand, is the drift and tendency in a different direction—towards a reserved and guarded use of the Bible, whether as the base and theme of public teaching, or as the true spiritual food of mind and heart in private? Is it at all the natural issue of the type of thought and belief, not, indeed, to despise or discredit the Book, of set purpose or in plain terms, but to place it in the background behind other religious interests, and to prefer to it other means of information upon religion?

With the answers to these two groups of questions goes, if I am right, very much that will test the truth of our Christianity. Unquestionably, the tendencies and results of the two types indicated are different, other things being equal. Let two men be found, both of them intelligent, and both devout, both of them finding their religion a daily reality to them. Let one of them be emphatically a Biblical Christian, thinking so of his Bible that he cannot help making it at once his chief friend and his true oracle in things divine. Let the other find those functions discharged for him, on the whole, rather by some other thing or things. There will tend to be a great difference between the two men in cast and direction of spiritual creed and religious life. Let me say nothing, if I can avoid it, that shall even seem unjust or unsympathetic. The less Biblical Christian may truly "hold the Head." He may develop, perhaps eminently, many true Christian character-

istics. But I hold that in the sum of the matter, if other things are equal, the two men being equally thoughtful, reverent, and conscious of duty, then the man who habitually seeks "God's heart in His Word," *cor Dei in verbis Dei*,[1] will on the whole develop his life on lines far more true than the other's to the primal Christian type, the New Testament type, the type illustrated for example in the closing chapters of the Ephesian Epistle, or in the First Epistle of St Peter.

The test of fidelity to the scale of Revelation.

These reflections lead me direct to another part of the subject; indeed we are already there. Assuming this supreme position of Scripture in relation to the idea of true religion, it seems to follow necessarily that true religion, as regards the beliefs and principles at its heart, will be tested as such by its fidelity to Scripture not only in the contents but *in the scale* of its ruling beliefs. It is possible very much to forget this. A true spiritual creed, and its proper result in a true spiritual life, have much to do not only with points but with proportions. Not only what I hold has to be considered, but the place and bulk in which I hold it. Two men may easily be supposed who would each answer "Yes" to every number of the same set of questions on articles of faith, and both with sincerity, and yet hold very different beliefs upon the whole, because of a great difference of scale. To one, the thing might seem quite subsidiary and unimportant which to the other was the vital point. One would see relations between this belief and that which were invisible or trifling to the other;

[1] A fine sentence in a letter of Gregory the Great (Epistolæ, iv., xxxi.), in which he urges a courtier friend to read his Bible daily.

and the whole set of beliefs would thus get a difference, to the different observers, which might be incalculable. And the fact of such differences would invite surely some correction, if there were any means of making it. It would indeed be vain to attempt that which is impossible, to make two minds, in our mortal state, see everything just alike. But it would be as right as it would be feasible to attempt *to improve* the correspondence, on one side or on the other, or perhaps on both, to the archetype of truth.

Now this points to what I mean by the call to test our religion not only by the contents of Holy Scripture but by their scale. It often seems to me, when considering, I trust with respect and candour, divergent types of religious teaching and practice, that this test needs to be far oftener and more consciously applied (more or less, no doubt, by all of us at times) to the matter and also (if I may say so) to the manner of our Christianity. What does Holy Scripture say, what does the New Testament in particular say, to the place and scale of such and such a teaching, such and such an action and practice, in religious thought and life? That inquiry, reverently and lovingly pursued, would often lead us a long way towards central truth and ideal working, and (sure result of genuine approaches towards them) towards all that is most valuable under the words unity and peace; "unity at the centre, in Jesus Christ, peace at the circumference, in work for Him."

A first application of this test, "beginning at home."

Let me, the writer, here in the first place be self-critical. Let my own cherished beliefs be frequently compared in scale with the scale of the sacred Word. Such and such articles of my confession and faith are, in the full conviction

of my soul, leading and ruling articles of the Gospel. Among them, for example, is that "article of a standing or falling Church," Justification by Faith—that is to say, acceptance before God on the sole account of Christ trusted. Supreme paradox, till a man in some measure knows himself, it shines before the fully awakened conscience in one aspect as our refuge, in another as our paradise. Now, this truth happens to have become dear to myself through experiences deep as the soul. And I have the joy and rest of finding it not merely present in the New Testament, or merely present in the Old (for indeed it *is* "testified of the law and the prophets"), but large, conspicuous, pervading, in them. It is unfolded as explicitly as possible in many passages of the first order of importance; it is taken for granted in a thousand more. Yet even with a truth like this, let me remember the law of scale. This wonderful and most living thing is of the very heart of true Christianity; where it is discredited, minimised, ignored, we are indeed so far forth in presence of "another Gospel." Yet let me often remind myself that the scale of truths in Scripture forbids me so to hold, or so to teach, Justification by Faith as to let it seem the whole message of Christ, or even the whole of the heart of that message. In places far too many to reckon that message deals with truth and life, with duty, with holiness, with work, with reward, in ways which have no *articulate* reference at all to Justification by Faith. True, I can see all the while, now more clearly, now more dimly and as it were by touch, connections and references threaded into it all over the Gospel scheme of truth. But if my belief, my motive, is to be true to Scripture, I must seek in

this also to correspond to the Scriptural scale. I must continually bear in mind, or at least keep near at hand, considerations about salvation and about the life of the saved, which, though profoundly related underneath to that grand truth of mercy, are, on the surface and in themselves, things to be pondered and to be used apart from it. I am untrue to the scale of Scripture, dangerously untrue to it, if I so hold and teach Justification by Faith as to ignore the vast range of revelation which affirms that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." My religion is so far not true if it does not remember that other range, and act upon it.

Another application: Church order.

Now let me attempt to indicate some instances elsewhere of what seems to me failure to correspond to scale, the scale of Scripture. A few outstanding examples will be amply enough for my purpose.

I presume first to plead for a close correspondence to scale, in teaching and practice, with regard to the order and organisation of the Christian Church. Sacred indeed is order, the noble counterpart in action to that eternal principle of law of which Hooker has written such majestic things in the first pages of his great treatise. Of the most secular examples of order, such an example as the system of a pagan empire, how nobly has the apostle spoken, to the Romans (chap. xiii.); even the "powers" which own a Nero for their visible head are related, in the invisible order, to God Himself. Every consideration of practice as well as of theory affirms the extreme importance of organisation, where anything has to be done that is to last, and to extend; so that we are prepared to find that

among the earliest acts of the pentecostal Church was a development of organisation, in the appointment of the Seven, and that organised ministrations appear everywhere, in the Acts and the Epistles, as a living factor in work and progress. Scarcely anything can be less true to the genius of Christianity than disorder, which must for certain betoken somewhere either sin or blunder, unless indeed it be the temporary result of unavoidable disasters inflicted from outside upon the Church.

But it is possible to erect a *cultus* of order, so to speak, which shall be altogether out of scale with the Scriptural presentation of the matter. I venture to affirm that the scale of New Testament teaching offers an impressive protest against many widely accepted forms of teaching and practice in this matter—forms most fully developed within the Roman borders, but to be seen also in large prominence among ourselves. I am reasonably persuaded of the apostolic date of a moderate but genuine Episcopacy; but it is Ignatius, not St John, not St Paul, who says, "Do nothing without the bishop." To the apostles, the organisation of the Church was unquestionably a thing of grave importance. But it was a thing of the second order, not the first, judging by scale. Is their main strength given to it in the Epistles? In the Acts, do we find them elaborately providing for the ecclesiastical coherence of the new Christendom? A few great necessaries are established: the apostolate, in its character of the corporate Witness to the resurrection, is completed; officers for Christian temporal relief are solemnly ordained; elders are constituted in every mission; a reference of great difficulties to Jerusalem is,

not claimed indeed, but generally understood, at least for a season. But do we get much farther than this in the Acts? In any case, my plea goes upon what is surely a fact on the face of the New Testament: judging by scale, the order and organisation of the community, sacredly important, are important with a greatness of the second order. In the first order stands the preaching of the Crucified, peace and life through personal faith, the promise of the Spirit, the power lodged in Christ for the believer's moral victory, and liberty, and serviceableness, the charities of the Christian home, the propaganda of Christianity by holy living, the blessed hope of the Lord's return, the eternal glory. I plead for a religion true in its teaching, and true in its practice, to this great scale of things in the Gospels and the apostolic Scriptures.

Another application: Church life.

In closest connection with this line of remark, I appeal for more correspondence with scale in certain views of the nature and function of the Church, now widely advocated. Such teachings as those which denote the Church (however defined, but anyhow as a visible body corporate) as the historic extension of the Incarnation of the Lord, as the one valid channel of His grace, or again as His representative and vicar upon the earth,—whatever else has to be said in criticism of them, seem to me to be altogether out of correspondence to New Testament scale. "Glorious things indeed are spoken" of the Church, above all in the great Epistles to Ephesus and to Colossæ. But, not now to discuss, however briefly, the question whether the language of those sublime paragraphs can be squared to the condi-

tions of any visible corporation, I only remark here that even in the Epistle to the Ephesians the scale of things warns us not to place even the Church of God too high. The Bride shines indeed there before us in her sacred glory. But the ever-blessed Bridegroom, personal and apart, fills vastly more of the scene, in the majesty of His life, power, and love. And He so fills it as to come immeasurably nearer to the individual than the Bride, as a body corporate, can possibly do. We, even in our corporate life, are viewed as "limbs" not of her but of Him. And the Dweller in the heart by faith is altogether He.

But, once more, I am not so much examining theories upon particular truths as dealing with the scale of things. My contention is, that it is untrue to New Testament scale to do what a powerful system of thought has long been doing —to erect the Church wellnigh into the Gospel. For there is a current doctrine of the Church, advocated with strong conviction and often with consummate skill, which tends to mean, to the common mind at least, that rather incorporation with a Society than direct spiritual contact with the always accessible Lord is the path to life. With decision I affirm that such a view of things is not true to the scale of Holy Scripture. According to that scale it is not allowed to us to present the Church as practically, for the individual, the mediatrix with the Mediator. Sublimely near, immediate, contiguous, to the individual soul's whole deepest need, stands nothing less nor other than "Jesus Christ Himself," if that scale is contemplated for our guidance.

Thoughts on the individual's relation to God: the Protestant principle.

I may be allowed to reproduce here a few paragraphs from a short tractate of my own,[1] in which the question of the man's immediate and individual access to God is considered from several points of view, and, amongst others, from that of the scale of Revelation:—

"Great is the place and function of the Church. But that place is not between the conscience, not between the soul, and the Redeemer. It is in the stress it laid upon that truth that the Protestant principle has done and is doing one of its noblest services to the world. I found, many years ago, a testimony to this in an unbiassed quarter—in an Essay by the late Mr J. S. Mill on the Positive Philosophy, printed in the 'Westminster Review' (April 1865). Mill examines Comte's estimate of types of Christianity, and takes him to task for his complete misreading of Protestantism, as if it were only negative, only destructive,—a mistake made by a great many persons beside Comte, but only possible for them, as for him, by defect of knowledge. 'Comte,' says Mill, 'misses one of the most important facts connected with Protestantism—its remarkable efficacy, as contrasted with Catholicism' (he means Romanism) 'in cultivating the intelligence and the conscience of the individual believer. The feeling of a direct responsibility of the individual immediately to God, is almost wholly a creation of Protestantism. Even when Protestants were nearly as persecuting as Catholics (quite as much so they never were), still they maintained that the true belief was not to be accepted from a priest, but to be sought and found by the believer; and that no one could

[1] 'How can the Individual Soul approach God?' (R.T.S.)

answer to God for him—he must answer for himself.' And Mill, standing then himself outside all creeds, goes on to comment, as well he may, upon the power of this view of things to give stuff and fibre to character, personal and national, wherever it prevails.

"Yes, let the sacred function of the Community be what it may, it must stand aside after all, and leave the ground open, when the soul, the mysterious personality, *the man*, rises up and goes in to claim in Christ its access to the Father, awful, blissful, and in secret—'As for me, nearness to God for me is good' (Ps. lxxiii. 28). For this he was made in his creation, waking up from the inscrutable mystery of its process to the mighty fact that he was in the image of his Maker. For this he was made again, out of the death and ruins of the Fall. Because of the Cross, and in the power of the Spirit, he is admitted, he is entitled, he is welcomed as with open arms, to an intercourse with God mediated to him by the Son of God alone, nothing between. Lift high the curtains of the Holiest, for he must enter; yea, they are already rent, from the top to the bottom, that he may pass within them, and stand with unveiled face before the secret glory, and speak his whole heart out to the heart of the Eternal, μετὰ παρρησίας, 'with the liberty of *saying anything*' to his Father. Let no Society, though divinely founded, no Ordinance, though of Christ's own giving, yet needing mortal ministration, no sacred Class or Order, however apostolic in succession, pass in with him there. True, they can, and they should, help him thither,—show him the avenue, point him to the door, reassure him of the rightness of

his entrance. But he enters — himself alone, or rather himself as one with the one eternal Priest who stands there in His own right, who has offered once for ever the sacrifice of peace, and now for ever is occupied with that other and resultant function of His solitary and sublime *sacerdotium*—to be man's open entrance in to God.

Illustrations from Holy Scripture.

"The whole record of Redemption is full of that entrance in. Such was the divine delight in it that, ages before the historic and, as it were, public opening of the door, there was already a wonderful anticipation. The saints of the Old Law are found speaking their souls out to the Lord, as the breath and habit of their lives; nothing between, absolutely nothing, but the fact of the promise and the covenant. True, their colloquies with God were of infinite significance to the community. Abraham under the Syrian stars, Moses on the desert cliff, Jeremiah in the courtyard in the beleaguered town, not only supplied examples of individual 'access'; their conversations with Heaven made links in the story of the redemption of the world. But, none the less, it was in itself individual intercourse, personal, direct; 'nothing between.' It was not the individual approaching God through the mediation of the community. A vast element in the phenomenon of Scripture is the precise converse: the voice of grace reaches the Community through the mediation of the individual believer.

"Think of the magnificent illustration of this, in the Old Testament, in the Book of Psalms. No doubt the Psalms, for the Jewish Church as for the Church Catholic, bore a liturgical significance; they passed into com-

mon worship; they became the voice of the Community to God. And no doubt many of them are public and corporate in their form, the expression of the experiences of the chosen Race, in its collective sins, and disciplines, and blessings. But, set these aside, they leave a mass, rich and wonderful, of purely individualistic Psalms, in which rises just the call and cry of the Ego to the Eternal. 'I have trusted in Thy mercy; my heart shall be glad in Thy salvation;' 'I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me;' 'My soul thirsteth for the living God;' 'Thou hast known my soul in adversities;' 'I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice;' 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet;' 'Thou art my portion;' 'As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness;' 'As for me, nearness to God for me is good.'

"Whatever part, in the ages of the Psalmists, was played by the order and ritual of the Society, the man, for his soul's inmost needs, was left alone with God: the servant went in to his Master to talk with Him, and the door was shut.

"To pass into the New Testament in order to study individual converse with God, is to take the clue of a labyrinth endless in its depth and beauty. Of this the words and the works of the Redeemer alike are full. 'I will; be thou clean;' 'I will in no wise cast him out;' 'I will manifest Myself to him.' The incidents of the Acts are perpetually individualistic: the Eunuch in his carriage, Cornelius in his chamber, Lydia by the river. Above all, we have Saul of Tarsus — the man chosen by the Spirit to contribute a third of its contents to the

New Testament, and to develop all that is most comprehensive and collective in the message of our salvation, but led to do all this in modes of exposition where the widest, the vastest, principles come to us alive and pulsating with the experiences of the man with God. 'In me there dwelleth no good thing;' 'I am crucified with Christ;' 'Christ liveth in me;' 'He gave Himself for me;' 'I can do all things in Him;' 'I know whom I have believed;' 'He is able to keep my deposit against that day.'

"This is a magnificent individualism, sanctifying, beatifying, vital. I hope I have guarded myself[1] from seeming to forget the other side in the spiritual life. I have tried to label with as legible a censure as I could the falsehood of the individualism which means isolation to one's own will, isolation even to one's own soul. But this is another thing—yea, in its depth it is the antithesis to that. It is an isolation to God, in the immediate intercourse of the regenerate soul with Him, an intercourse whose very possibility is denied, as you know, by arbitrary and *à priori* speculation, but in vain—*e pur si muove*—it is an experienced fact. This is an isolation which sends the soul out again, filled and expanded by his presence, to contribute to the Community, to live no longer for itself, to be at His service in others all the day, ay, and to see deeper into others, their struggles, their sorrows, and their sins, than it ever could do if it did not know itself in the light of intercourse with God. For that intercourse there is no substitute; it knows no second best. Would we be 'men

[1] In previous pages of the tractate.

in Christ' indeed? Then, 'as for me, nearness to God for me is good.'"

In the study of our theme, one aspect of the matter glides always insensibly into the next. I have been considering the scale of Scripture teaching on the subject of the Church of Christ in some of its relations to the individual Christian. And already, by a certain necessity, I have alluded to another great question, on which, as it seems to me, the recollection of Scriptural scale is all-important. It is a question organically connected with its predecessor. I have spoken of our Lord in "His solitary and sublime *sacerdotium*"; I have touched the problem of priesthood.

Another application of the test of scale: Christian priesthood.

It is not in the least my intention, for it would be out of place here in this volume, to discuss that great problem as a substantive topic. I allude to it in one of its aspects only, and that with reference to the scale of Revelation; I ask whether it is true *to that scale* to claim a special sacerdotal function for the Christian Ministry. That the Christian minister is a priest is certain, for he is a Christian; and the Christian is made by his Redeemer not only king but priest, not only ruler but sacrificial offerer, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. ii. 5). We find him in the New Testament in the actual exercise of his functions. He "presents his body, a living sacrifice." He "offers the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of his lips as they give thanks." He "does good, and communicates, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xii. 15, 16). But this sacrificial priesthood is altogether common to the

whole believing company, and is exercised quite equally, in idea, by every member. The pastor, the commissioned minister of Word and Ordinance, has other functions perfectly special; but he is in no sense *specially* a priest, a sacrificial offerer. He is a priest, spiritually, as he is a Christian—not as he is a minister, in distinctive function.[1]

What now are the facts of scale, the scale of Scriptural instruction, in this great matter? To reply in one sentence: the Christian Ministry has a long and splendid catena of descriptions and designations given to it in the New Testament, but never once there is it designated a priesthood. And my plea upon this great and remarkable phenomenon is just this; that to claim a *distinctive* priestly character for it—still more, to make that claim a ruling and vital element in the ministerial idea, to press upon the conscience and belief of the Church a conception of the Christian Ministry at all analogous to that of the Aaronic hierarchy—is out of scale with the New Testament Scriptures.[2] And if it be so, I must humbly but with firmness confess my conviction that it fails to satisfy this grand

[1] I may remark that we find the word ἀρχιερεὺς, "chief priest," used in the very early 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,' in connection with the Christian Ministry. But it is applied (in a style, as it seems to me, rather poetical or rhetorical than otherwise) to *the prophets* of the Church, who are by no means identified in the 'Teaching' with the "bishops." The passage occurs c. xiii. § 3: "All the first-fruits . . . thou shalt take and give to the prophets: for they are your ἀρχιερεῖς." Does not the writer mean that they are the "*leaders of the priests*"—*i.e.*, of the disciples generally—in the utterance of spiritual truth and praise? Even thus, the phrase stands wholly unsupported by Scripture, where the title ἀρχιερεὺς is, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, jealously appropriated to the Lord.

[2] I may refer here to the Rev. H. Dimock's 'Christian Doctrine of Sacerdotium, and Our One High Priest' (E. Stock).

test of true religion: its direction, its sympathies, the system of ideas to which the claim belongs, are in a serious measure discrepant with the revealed ideal of the faith.

Let me speak with all respectful caution—nay, with reverence—towards the deep beliefs of others. How can I use words which approach invective or reprobation, while the recollection of the saints who have held, and who hold, the sacerdotal view of the Christian Ministry is strong in my heart? But I am equally unable to ignore, or to explain away, this large phenomenon of the scale of Revelation; and the solemn consideration of its testing power, as it is applied to theory and teaching, cannot but possess me. Never, I reaffirm, never, by the Lord or His apostles, is the Christian pastor designated as such a *sacerdos*. At the very most in that direction we have St Paul, as he writes to the Romans (xv. 16), speaking of his "priest-work," done in the *offering up of the Gentiles* to God; or again, in his Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 17), of his readiness to shed upon the sacrifice of their faith the libation of his blood. But is this any tangible footing for a sacerdotal doctrine of the Christian Ministry? Is it in the least degree a justification for a perpetual and urgent insistence upon that doctrine? Can it be safe, can it be scrupulously true to the mind of our Master and His chosen messengers, to ignore so greatly the scale of their language on a matter so sacred and so weighty?

Another application: Episcopacy.

I dare to extend the same question to the matter, already touched upon from other sides, of ecclesiastical order. For myself, the immemorial claims of a temperate and constitutional Episcopacy are sacred indeed; and when I have

assured myself of their historical solidity, I see further manifold reasons for the belief that the episcopal regimen, worked and used with holy wisdom, is capable of the noblest results in the life and enterprise of the Church. But once more I turn to the scale of information and instruction in the New Testament as, in this matter also, my test, not only of the truth of beliefs, but of their true proportions. And when I have considered that scale once more, modestly, I hope, and with no wish to assert my own judgments as such, but anxious to be true to the scale, I see little support in that direction for any view of the episcopal constitution which would make it either the one sure channel of grace or the one possible valid form of order. I see everywhere love and loyalty claimed for the Christian Pastorate, assumed to be laborious and devoted. But I see also everywhere such notes of a concurrent elasticity of life and method in the Church in general as cannot but warn me beforehand not to erect the lines of even primeval order into a vital test of the very existence of a Church. I see everywhere order sacred, but life and love, gathered round the Lord and supplied continually to every limb direct from Him, more sacred still. And in view of this I cannot but decline to make Episcopacy—historical as it is, primeval, beneficial—my first question, my first test of religion from the side of order. I must, in Christianity, in the Christianity of the New Testament, put the internally sacred first and the externally sacred second.

I must cordially welcome, in the brotherhood of my Lord, in His membership, in His Body, and therefore in His Church (if the unworthiest of all members may pre-

sume to talk of welcome), all those who love Him, rely upon Him, follow Him, "worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Assuredly I cannot, where the alternative is forced upon my thought, demand that the question of episcopal connection shall override that of spiritual truth and life.

An illustration from the history of Anglican thought.

Am I a bad Anglican for so concluding? I hope not, or I should have misgivings about Anglicanism. But I know something of the history of Anglican thought. And among other names I remember one John Cosin, Bishop of Durham, 1660 to 1674, Churchman of Churchmen, learned, reverent, episcopalian after the Laudian type. I remember how, in exile in France in the Commonwealth time, he was asked, by a fellow-exile, for his counsel in the dilemma between the Roman Mass and the Huguenot Communion; and how, after a long discussion of Huguenot orders and a lament over what he thought their *imperfection*, he yet ruled for their *validity*, and advised his friend to go to the Holy Table in the Huguenot Church.[1] "It is far less safe," he writes on another occasion,[2] "to join with those men that alter the *credenda*, the vitals of religion, than with those who meddle only with the *agenda* and rules of religion." In other words, he deprecates the Huguenot's lack of a bishop, but he recoils with dread from the Romanist's liberties taken with apostolic truth. I think that Cosin was true to scale in his attempt to test true religion.

[1] Letter to Cordel, 1650, in Basire's 'Account of Bishop Cosin.'

[2] Cosin's 'Opinion for communicating rather with Geneva than Rome,' published 1684.

A final application: the external and the internal.

But I must not pursue indefinitely my illustrations of the test of scale. Let me conclude, and briefly, by coming yet closer home to the heart, and that with a view by no means to only one section or direction of ecclesiastical beliefs. For myself first, and then for any who may care at all to weigh my words, be their "school" what it may, I would point in closing to the vast scale of Scripture teaching on a supreme and far-reaching question. I mean the general question between religion contemplated as external usage, order, rite, regimen, *however true and Scriptural in any case all these may be*, and religion contemplated as the life of inward, God-given, faith, hope, and sacred love. In the ideal, assuredly, the true internal should issue in the true external, and so the true external should be the sure counterpart and index of the true internal. But, even in the Church of Christ, ideals, genuine ideals, most certainly in matters of exterior adjustment, are not our experience, and never have been yet. We are driven accordingly, ever and again, to ponder certain alternatives, and to test such sides of the balance by reference to the scale of the Oracles of God. It was so of old. Isaiah reverenced the Temple and its order; under his Master's inspiration he calls those marble courts "the courts of God," "*My courts*" (i. 12). But when he sees them trodden, "trampled," by worshippers unspiritual, unholy, even though they were worshipping by a ritual whose canon had been drawn by the Holy Ghost (Heb. ix. 8), he reproves the worship, in the name of Jehovah, as one great irreverence, and sends people off to seek a change of heart, a transfiguration of life. St James, the ascetic (if we may trust Hegesippus) among

the writers of the New Testament, assuredly thought no scorn of outward fast, and prayer, and reverences of demeanour. Yet when he speaks of "religion," "religious worship," "religious discipline" (*θρησκεία*, i. 26, 27), his whole emphasis is laid upon the "vanity" of it without internal holiness and its fair fruits in a chastened tongue, a practically loving life, a spotless walk in this sinful world. St Paul, the mighty Pharisee-convert to the faith which he once destroyed, knew all about the ancient order, and also proved himself, for the Christian Church, her great constructive administrator. Yet for him circumcision *and uncircumcision* are equally "nothing" compared with "a new creation," and with "faith which worketh by love." The gift of the angelic tongues, ay, the utmost devotion of martyrdom, or of voluntary beggary, all are "nothing," dissociated from the love which is the working out of personal faith in Jesus. Nay, the Lord Himself, sitting at Sychar by the well, discoursing of eternal truth with one poor typical human soul, affirms indeed with a startling emphasis the now often-forgotten fact that "salvation is of the Jews"; but in the next sacred breath He says that the age was just expiring in which externalism had had its great work to do. "Neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, shall they worship the Father. . . . The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Here, indeed, are tests of true religion. What are they? A transfigured life, a bridled tongue, a walk of loving

beneficence and unworldly whiteness, a new creation, love springing up evermore from living faith, worship in spirit and in truth.[1]

We must needs look upon the Church problems of our day from many points of view—from those of history and of general reason among others. But let us much oftener than all look upon them from the point of view of the precepts and the promises of the Lord of Holiness. That viewpoint will help us to many an unerring test of "things that differ." But it will also help us to what is better still—the supreme remedy for the ills of mistake and strife. For that will be the place from whence we shall look up to ask, to expect, and to receive, the gifts of God, which are gifts indeed. It will be there that we shall hail, in due time, may it be very soon, such an effusion of the sevenfold SPIRIT as shall supremely glorify JESUS CHRIST to the whole Church on earth. Then, and only then, a coalescence, the surest and the most fruitful of all, shall set in and prevail — springing up from the depths, not pressed down upon the surface — a union in the love of God, manifested in the loving doing of His will.

[1] I seize the occasion to call attention to a weighty letter by the Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken (in the 'Record' of March 17, 1899), in which the question of the "mechanical" in religion is admirably handled. The letter, I am glad to see, has been reprinted in a separate form, 'The Mechanical *versus* the Spiritual' (J. F. Shaw).

THE LAITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

By P. V. SMITH, LL.D.

IT is generally conceded that the Church of England ought to possess greater power and freedom of managing her own affairs than she enjoys at present, and that the possession of these privileges for centuries past by the Established Church of Scotland shows that they might be accorded to our own Church without dissolving her connection with the State. It is also generally admitted that if they are bestowed on the Church of England, they cannot be confined to her bishops or clergy, but her laity must have some share in them. Here, however, the agreement ends. When we inquire who are to be the laity to whom a voice in Church government is to be granted, and to what extent they are to participate in it, a wide divergence of opinion prevails. What is to be the qualification of a layman for the exercise of the contemplated new ecclesiastical functions? Is it to be English domicile, baptism, confirmation, or habitual communion? And how far is the power

of the laity to extend? Is it to be confined to external and material matters, or are they also to have a voice in the definition or interpretation of faith and doctrine? It will be the aim of the following pages to discuss these questions and endeavour to suggest a satisfactory solution for them.

As a preliminary step, however, in our investigation, it is indispensable that we should form a clear idea of the present position of the laity, and realise distinctly what, under existing circumstances, constitutes lay membership of the Church, and what control a lay member possesses over her affairs.

I. Present Status and Powers of the Laity.

§ 1. *The Laity of the Church.*

Original identity of Church with nation.

In order fully to understand the existing position of the Church laity in England, it is necessary, as in the case of our other institutions, to go back to the earliest times of our history. Our English forefathers came over to this island as pagans, but found a British Christian Church existing here, which they overthrew and practically annihilated, except in Wales. By degrees, however, the newly founded kingdoms of the Angles and Saxons were converted to Christianity, and all the baptised Christians in them were members of one or other of the *ecclesiæ Anglorum*—the Churches of the English, as Bede calls the different dioceses which were formed in the various kingdoms. Towards the end of the seventh century, less than a hundred years after the landing of Augustine in Kent,

and about one hundred and fifty years before England became a united realm, these dioceses were consolidated into one Church of England, with which the Welsh dioceses also became in process of time incorporated. Thenceforward all baptised English folk, and ultimately all baptised Welsh folk as well, were members of the Church of England; and this state of things continued *de facto* throughout some nine centuries until the year 1565, and *de jure* for nearly a century and half longer. The Lollards and others might reject some of the doctrines accepted by the Church in their day, and might be burnt as heretics for so doing. But it never occurred to them to set up a separate sect of their own, nor did their adversaries ever accuse them of so doing. Similarly, throughout the various phases of the Reformation, in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary, and the early part of Elizabeth's reign, men were deprived of their spiritual posts and suffered imprisonment and death for their adhesion to the medieval doctrines on the one hand or to the reformed doctrines on the other, according as the authorities at the time favoured the opposite opinions. But amid all the oscillations of the period, no man on either side dreamt of voluntarily deserting the communion of the Church. He might be excommunicated or he might be put to death; but until one or other of these fates befell him, he regarded himself, and was regarded by others, as a member of the Church, however much he might differ in opinion or in practice from those who for the moment controlled her destinies.

Accordingly we find that in 1552 an Act of Parliament, which prescribed the use of the Second Prayer-Book of

Edward VI. (5 & 6 Edw. VI., c. 1), enacted that all persons inhabiting within the realm of England or any other of the king's dominions should, if they had no lawful or reasonable excuse for absence, resort to their parish church or chapel accustomed on all Sundays and other holy days, and abide orderly and soberly during the time of the common prayer, preaching, or other service of God, upon pain of punishment by the censures of the Church. The Act of Uniformity of the first year of Elizabeth's reign (1 Eliz., c. 2, s. 14) repeated this enactment, with the addition that offenders should for every offence forfeit the sum of twelvepence, to be levied by the churchwardens to the use of the poor of the parish.

First schisms.

But within the next twelve years two events occurred which materially affected the maintenance of ecclesiastical unity in England. In 1565 certain clergy of the metropolis were deprived of their benefices for obstinately refusing to wear the surplice when officiating in divine service. The more influential of these submitted to the sentence and continued members of the Church; but some of them openly seceded from her, and established a sect and a worship of their own. Five years later Pope Pius V. issued his bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, which excommunicated and affected to depose Queen Elizabeth as a heretic. Up to this time English people who acknowledged the papal supremacy in ecclesiastical matters had continued to frequent their parish churches, in spite of the reform which had taken place in the liturgy. But this was henceforth impossible. They were compelled to select between allegiance to the Pope and allegiance to the National Church; and, while some

chose the latter alternative, a large number felt conscientiously bound to adopt the former.

The law, however, did not yet recognise the right of either Roman Catholics or Protestants to sever themselves from the National Church. Just as traitors or outlaws were treated as still subjects, albeit unworthy subjects, of the Crown, so Popish recusants on the one hand and Nonconformists on the other were regarded as members of the Church, although lacking in the performance of their ecclesiastical and religious duties, and liable to punishment on that account. Accordingly, in 1581 a further penalty of £20 was imposed on every person above sixteen years of age for every month in which he or she should neglect to repair to some church or usual place of common prayer; and persons who were guilty of this neglect for twelve months were to be bound over to good behaviour with securities in a sum of not less than £200.

It must be remembered that at this period, in requiring all persons to attend church, it was unnecessary to take account of any but Christians, since the Jews were by law banished from the country. This ban, however, was removed by Cromwell; and the religious conflicts of the seventeenth century led inevitably to a modification of the legal position of the Church. Not that this was immediately effected; for during the Commonwealth there was no more religious toleration than there had been in the previous hundred years. The dominant form of religion was changed, but the new ascendancy was as impatient of rivals as the old. The same intolerance, so far as the law was concerned, prevailed during the reigns of the last two

Stuarts, though James II. affected to relax it by an unconstitutional exercise of royal authority.

Toleration of Dissent.

But the Revolution of 1688 inaugurated in some respects a new era. On the one hand, the Declaration of Rights enacted that a person who was reconciled to or held communion with the Church of Rome, or should profess the popish religion or marry a papist, should be incapable of wearing the crown, which should in that case descend to the person being a Protestant who would have inherited it if the disqualified person were then dead; and twelve years later, when there was a prospect, which was afterwards realised, of a member of the House of Brunswick succeeding to the throne, it was enacted that every wearer of the crown should join in communion with the Church of England. On the other hand, however, the accession of William and Mary was immediately followed by the Toleration Act, which gave a legal status to Protestant dissenters by expressly exempting them from some previously imposed penalties. If they scrupled to take the oaths required on the assumption of certain offices, they were permitted, if chosen, to execute these offices by deputy. Their ministers also, under defined conditions, were allowed to officiate publicly, and were exempted from serving on juries and from holding parochial offices.

The laws against Roman Catholics were not relaxed until all political danger from the Stuart Pretenders had passed away; and it was not until the present century that full religious and civil rights were conceded either to them or to other dissenters from the Established Church. Up to the year 1828 the Test and Corporation Acts, passed in the

reign of Charles II., required all civil and military officers to make a declaration against transubstantiation and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of England, and imposed a similar sacramental test on the holders of any municipal office. The repeal of these laws was followed a year later by the measure for Roman Catholic relief; and in 1846 a large number of Acts imposing penalties and disabilities on account of religious opinions were expunged from the statute-book. The result of this legislation, and of the simplification in the oaths required on entering Parliament and on assuming various offices, has been that, with the exception of the throne, and possibly of the woolsack,[1] all civil posts are open alike to members of every religious denomination, or of no denomination at all.

Legal presumption of Church membership.

Throughout the whole of this shifting scene one fact remains clear. The law has until quite recently assumed that all English folk are, or ought to be, members of the Church of England. Disabilities, and even penalties, have been imposed on failure to conform and be in full communion with her; but the very imposition of these disabilities and penalties implies the *primâ facie* right as well as duty of every man to attend her services and receive the sacrament according to her usage. It is remarkable that

[1] There is no positive enactment, as in the case of the sovereign, that the Lord Chancellor shall or shall not be of a particular religion; and the disability or otherwise of a Roman Catholic to sit on the woolsack depends upon the net result of a complicated series of enactments by which the old complex form of oath, which included a declaration against popery and transubstantiation, has been gradually superseded by a simple oath of a neutral character, and upon the effect of the various provisoes and reservations inserted in the course of the simplifying process.

this theory has been retained even in the course of granting relief to those who have failed to do so. Nothing can be more instructive than the mode in which the Act of 1846, already alluded to, dealt with the legislation of Edward VI. in respect of church-going. By that Act the enactment of 1552, cited above, which enjoined upon all persons attendance at church on Sundays and holy days upon pain of punishment by the censures of the Church, is repealed only "so far as the same affects persons dissenting from the worship or doctrines of the United Church of England and Ireland, and usually attending some place of worship other than the Established Church"; a proviso being added that no pecuniary penalty shall be imposed upon any person for default in attendance. So that, in strict law, a professed Roman Catholic or Baptist, who habitually attended no place of worship, might be censured by the Ordinary for not coming to his parish church.[1]

In conformity with the long-established legal view of churchmanship, we do not find, before the repeal of the Test or Corporation Acts, any attempt to distinguish one portion of the community from the others by styling them "members of the Church of England." Since that time the expression, though extremely rare, has been occasionally employed. The Church Building Act, 1831, empowers the bishop under certain circumstances to vest the perpetual right of nominating a minister of a newly erected church in trustees, "being members of the United Church of England and Ireland"; and there is a provision for the election of two persons, "being members of the Established

[1] See Taylor *v.* Timson, Law Rep. (1888), 20 Q. B. D., 671.

Church," to be churchwardens of a new parish formed under an earlier section of the Act. A similar qualification is required by 6 & 7 Vict., c. 37, for persons chosen churchwardens in new parishes under that Act. By the New Parishes Act, 1856, every person appointed a trustee of the patronage of a church under an assignment by the Commissioners is required, upon his appointment, to sign a declaration that he is a member of the Church. The expression also occurs in the Universities Tests Act, 1871; and a similar declaration of membership is required by the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, from a judge appointed under that Act before entering on his office, and also from residents in a diocese who make a complaint in respect of the Cathedral. But neither in these statutes nor elsewhere is any attempt made to define Church membership.

Present definition of a lay churchman.

When, therefore, the question is asked, What constitutes a lay member of the Church of England? we may reply that by the English ecclesiastical and civil law all baptised persons domiciled in England[1] are considered, and are entitled to be treated as, lay members of the Church of England, with the exception of (1) persons who have been ordained by a bishop of some branch of the Catholic Church; (2) persons who have been and remain lawfully excommunicated; and (3) persons who, by their own language or conduct, or, if they are of immature age, by the language or conduct of those who are responsible for their religious training, expressly or by necessary implication disclaim Church membership.

[1] The expression "England" throughout this treatise must, of course, always be understood as including Wales.

§ 2. *The Existing Powers of the Laity.*

Original powers of laity.

It may be easily surmised that if the legal aspect of Church membership is as vague as we have seen it to be, the powers of lay Church members, as such, are at the present day equally undefined. In pre-Reformation times the laity exercised, through the sovereign as their representative, usually with the concurrence either of a council of his nobles or of the Witenagemote, and, afterwards, Parliament, a powerful influence in the conduct of Church affairs. The State passed laws on religious matters; the king and his advisers had a considerable voice in the establishment and alteration of bishoprics and in the appointment of bishops; and previously to the Conquest the law in ecclesiastical and civil proceedings was administered by the same tribunals. Moreover, a private individual who built and endowed a parish church secured in return the perpetual right of appointing the rector, and thus acquired a position of importance in the local organisation of the Church.

The increased subjection of the Church of England to the see of Rome which followed upon the Norman Conquest diminished the power of the laity in ecclesiastical matters; but this power was never wholly lost, and at the Reformation was entirely recovered. Not only were appeals from the ecclesiastical Courts then transferred from the see of Rome to the Crown, so that, in the words of the oath as settled on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the sovereign was thenceforth the only supreme governor of this realm, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical as in temporal

causes; but the Act for the Submission of the Clergy (25 Henry VIII., c. 19) established the complete control both of the Crown and of Parliament over all future Church legislation. The clergy in their Convocations were not to enact any canons or constitutions without the royal assent and licence; and they were not to be at liberty, even with such assent and licence, to make any canons or constitutions which should be contrary or repugnant to the royal prerogative or to the customs, laws, or statutes of the realm. At the same time, the appointment of the archbishops and bishops was definitely vested in the Crown; and upon the dissolution of the monasteries a large amount of Church patronage, which had previously been possessed by them, passed into lay hands. Moreover, from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards it has been the usual practice to appoint laymen as judges in the ecclesiastical courts.

Powers since the Reformation.

Since the Reformation, therefore, all ecclesiastical legislation has been carried on by Parliament, with or without the concurrence of the Convocations; and so long as Parliament was composed exclusively of Churchmen, and the members of the House of Commons were virtually elected by Churchmen, the laity of the Church had no cause to complain of an insufficient share in the management of her affairs. But the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707 produced the first rift in this state of things, and during the last seventy years the whole complexion of the case has been altogether changed. Parliament retains the same control over ecclesiastical matters as it had three centuries ago. But the House of Commons no longer in any approximate degree represents the Church of England. A con-

siderable fraction of the electorate are outside the Church, and a large number within the House itself repudiate Church membership. Consequently, although the laity of the Church continue, as citizens, to possess, in common with the rest of the people of the United Kingdom, a preponderating voice in Church legislation, yet, as members of the Church, they have no part or lot in it whatsoever.

Voluntary Church bodies.

Attempts have been made during the last half-century to remedy this anomaly by the formation of ruridecanal and diocesan conferences, in which the clergy and laity of the Church should meet on equal terms for discussion and action, and by the creation of a House of Laymen to supplement the Upper and Lower Houses of Convocation, in each of the two provinces of Canterbury and York. These bodies have been of use in fomenting an interest in Church matters. The conferences have rendered practical service in the organisation, financial and otherwise, of the dioceses and rural deaneries. The Houses of Laymen supplied appreciable aid, by the expression of their opinion, to the passing of the Clergy Discipline Act, 1892, and the Benefices Act, 1898, and to the introduction into the Parish Councils Bill of clauses to protect the interests of the Church and her charities before it became law in the spring of 1894. But they can never be otherwise than makeshifts and imperfect substitutes for constitutional assemblies of the Church laity, with a formal status and legal powers.

Vestries.

When we turn from the apex to the base of the pyramid of Church organisation, we encounter the same phenomenon. The lay element in our different parishes is constitution-

ally represented by the vestry, the churchwardens and sidesmen, and the parish clerk. In earlier times the civil and ecclesiastical parish was, of course, in all cases identical, and the vestry, which dealt with the civil as well as the ecclesiastical affairs of the parish, consisted of all persons of either sex assessed and rated for the maintenance of the church, and, later on, for the relief of the poor, in respect of any house or land within the parish; persons who were more than three months in arrear in the payment of any rate being, however, excluded from taking part in the proceedings. The churchwardens, who likewise might be of either sex, were chosen either jointly by the incumbent and parishioners, or one by the incumbent and the other by the parishioners; and persons so chosen were, with certain privileged exceptions, bound to serve. With the civil duties attached to their office we are not here concerned. Their ecclesiastical functions consisted not only in the custody and repair of the church and its furniture, the disposal, jointly with the incumbent, of money collected at the offertory proper, the seating of the congregation, and the maintenance of order in the church and churchyard (all which duties still appertain to the office), but also the presentment to the ordinary of parishioners who neglected to attend church, or to communicate at Easter, or who promoted erroneous doctrine or offended their brethren by notorious evil living. The duty of the sidesmen, who were also to be chosen by the incumbent and parishioners, was to assist the churchwardens in the discharge of their various functions. At every Easter-tide the account of the church finances for the past year was presented to the

vestry, together with an estimate of the necessary expenditure for the coming twelve months; and the vestry voted a church-rate to meet this, which, like the poor-rate, was levied compulsorily on the whole body of the parishioners. So long as these were all attached members of the Church the system worked well, and gave to the Church laity a fairly adequate voice in the affairs of their parish church. But this homogeneity, of course, no longer exists; and, besides the prevalence of dissent, other changes have combined to render the vestries, as at present constituted, wholly unsatisfactory exponents of the opinion of the Church laity in the various parishes.

The latest of these changes, but one which may conveniently be mentioned first, was the abolition of the compulsory levying of church-rates in 1868. It is true that the Act by which this was effected expressly authorised the vestries of old parishes and the quasi-vestries of new ecclesiastical parishes to make voluntary church-rates. But the uncertainty as to collecting these, if made, has in practice effectually prevented any attempt to assess them. Consequently our churches, whether new or old, are now largely maintained by money voluntarily contributed, either within the church or outside, without any methodical endeavour to ascertain or follow the wishes of the contributors as to its application, except in the insignificant number of parishes where voluntary church councils have been established. In fact, except in some few parishes where by custom the vestry appoint the sexton, the organist, and even the incumbent, the only ecclesiastical functions which are at present possessed by the vestry of an old parish, or the

"meeting in the nature of a vestry"[1] in a new parish, are the election of churchwardens, the examination of the accounts of any endowments for church repairs or for church charities, and the expression of the approval or otherwise of the parishioners to alterations on the church or churchyard, for which a faculty is sought in the ecclesiastical courts.

But besides this limitation of the powers of the vestries, various anomalies have been introduced into their constitution. One of these is due to the very expansion of the Church herself. As already stated, the civil and ecclesiastical parish was originally, in all cases, identical. But as population increased, and additional churches were required, it has been found necessary in many cases to create new ecclesiastical parishes within the original parish. Within that of Manchester, for instance, 117 new parishes have been formed. Under the Acts of Parliament which have authorised this subdivision, two churchwardens are to be appointed yearly for each new parish, one by the incumbent and the other by the persons within its area, who would have been entitled to vote at the election of churchwardens if it had been an ancient parish. In these cases, however, the right of electing churchwardens for the ancient parish church has not been confined to the inhabitants of the area which remains ecclesiastically connected with that church (although under the Act of 1868 they alone can make a voluntary church-rate for its maintenance and repair); so that the ratepayers living in one of these new parishes can vote for churchwardens of that parish, and

[1] So styled in the Burial Act, 1857 (20 & 21 Vict., c. 81, s. 5).

also for those of the old parish church, with which they have ceased to have any ecclesiastical connection.

The existence of plural voting is a further anomaly in connection with the vestries of ancient parishes. By Sturges Bourne's Act, passed in 1818, members of these vestries were given votes varying from one to six, according to their rateable assessment—those rated at under £50 having one vote, while those who are rated at or above that figure have one vote for every £25 of their assessment up to £150. This was all very well so long as the vestries levied rates on the property of the parish for secular purposes, and was even defensible in ecclesiastical matters while the fabric of the church was maintained by a church-rate on the same property. But now that this has been abolished, it is monstrous that, in the election of a churchwarden, and the approval or otherwise of a proposed alteration in the sacred edifice, a well-to-do ratepayer who contributes nothing to the church may have six times the voting power of his poorer neighbour, who, according to his means, is liberally supporting it. Lastly, if by custom, or by special Act of Parliament, or by the adoption of Sir John Hobhouse's General Act of 1831, an ancient parish, instead of transacting its affairs in open vestry, happens to have had a select vestry, consisting of a few representatives elected by the whole number of the ratepayers, this select vestry is still the legal body for choosing churchwardens and managing the ecclesiastical affairs of the parish, although, as the result of recent legislation, the vestry may have ceased to perform any of

those civil functions with a view to which the arrangement was originally made.

These anomalies are confined to the vestries of the old parishes, and have not been extended to the quasi-vestries of new ecclesiastical parishes. But these latter have one feature in common with their old prototypes. Although created and existing simply for Church purposes, they consist, as we have already seen, like the old vestries, of all ratepayers alike, irrespective of any religious qualification. The right of attending and voting at them is in no way dependent upon Church membership, but is shared by members of all religious bodies. Moreover, in the old parishes, the member of any religious body may be a churchwarden, though Dissenters and Roman Catholics, if in the ministry of their respective communities, are exempt from being compelled to serve, and, if not in the ministry, may, if they prefer it, execute the office by deputy.

Church patronage.

If we turn to Church patronage the case is pretty nearly the same. It is true that the appointments to archbishoprics and bishoprics and other Church patronage must be nominally in the hands of a member of the Church of England, by whom alone the throne can be occupied. But the Prime Minister, in accordance with whose recommendation Crown appointments are usually made, may be of any or no religion; and as respects all other patronage, no religious qualification is required for its exercise (with the exception of some few cases in which, under the Church Buildings Act, 1831, as already mentioned, or under the express provisions of private trust-deeds, trustee patrons

are required to be members of the Church, and with the further exception of the disability which, on political rather than religious grounds, has been placed on Roman Catholics). The Benefices Act, 1898, has made no alteration in this respect. That Act, no doubt, requires that before the appointment of a new incumbent a month's previous notice shall be given to the churchwardens of the parish, who are to publish it on the principal notice-board of the church. But the opportunity thus afforded to parishioners and others of objecting to the proposed appointment on some legal ground may be taken advantage of by those who are not in communion with the Church equally with those who are.

Present position.

It appears, then, that whether we look at the Church as a whole or at her parochial machinery, while her laity possess, as citizens, in common with the rest of the nation, certain ecclesiastical powers, yet as Church laymen they possess practically NONE.

II. Proper Functions of the Laity, and Qualification for their Exercise.

§ 1. *The Rightful Powers of the Laity.*

In entering upon the second or speculative portion of our subject, it will be best to reverse the order of considering its two branches, and to discuss first what new powers should be intrusted to the laity of the Church, and then the conditions to be required of the persons who exercise them. We shall also find it convenient to proceed upwards

from the bottom to the top, from the local to the general, instead of following the order adopted in the previous inquiry. It is not suggested, in the following pages, that any further alteration should be made in the law of patronage. The Benefices Act, 1898, already alluded to, has probably settled that question as regards parochial benefices for some time to come; and the question of the appointment to bishoprics, deaneries, and cathedral stalls is one which it would be idle to raise until the Church has acquired a large measure of self-government in other directions.

Powers required by parishioners.

There is a pretty general agreement that in some form or other the laity ought to have greater powers of control over their parish churches. Canon Gore, in 'Essays on Church Reform,'[1] of which he is the editor and first contributor, advocates formally constituted parish councils, and considers that they (1) should have a certain control over the appointment of new incumbents; (2) should be authorised to make a representation to the bishop in case of the immorality or incompetence of the incumbent, with a view to his removal; (3) should determine the destination of a large part of the collections made in the parish church; and (4) should, within, of course, legal limits, have some recognised power to restrain alterations in the accustomed ritual or mode of worship practised in the church. It is obvious that none of these suggestions could be carried into effect without legislation. But while the first two would require an alteration in the legal rights of patrons and incumbents, the last two might be legalised without any encroachment on existing personal interests. There can, it is conceived,

[1] London: John Murray. 1898.

be little dispute as to the propriety of their being adopted. As the law at present stands, the incumbent has the exclusive control over all collections in church other than those which are taken by way of offertory during what is generally known as the ante-communion service, or which are made for church repairs. But in many parishes he informally consults his churchwardens, sidesmen, or a voluntary church council, as to the objects for which these extra collections shall be made. It is clear that the more the people, by their representatives, are taken into the confidence of the parson as to the purposes for which their alms are asked during divine service, the more likely are they to contribute liberally towards those purposes. The question of giving them a voice in the determination of the ritual of the church is one of more difficulty, yet its propriety is surely incontestable. At present no alteration can legally be made in the fabric of our parish churches—not even to the limited extent of substituting a bit of coloured glass for plain glass in the most unimportant window in the edifice—without a faculty from the Ordinary; in the granting or withholding of which he is largely, though not absolutely, guided by the opinion on the matter expressed by the parishioners in vestry assembled. Yet we find incumbents up and down the country adopting colours in the vestments in which they perform divine service, and introducing all manner of changes in the service itself, without any attempt to ascertain the wishes of the bulk of their parishioners. This is neither good for the parson nor for the people. The day for rigid uniformity in public worship has gone by. Variety, within limits, is right and edify-

ing; but the selection of the particular form in each case ought not to be left to the mere caprice of the incumbent. No important change ought ever to be made without the licence of the Ordinary, and, except for very urgent reasons, that licence ought not to be granted unless the parishioners as a body consent to the change.

Powers required in general Church administration.

But the rightful functions of lay Churchmen are not limited to parish affairs. In the various non-established branches of the Anglican communion—in Ireland, in the Colonies, and in the United States—the laity have a place in the diocesan synods, in the provincial synods, and in the general synods. The lay representatives in these assemblies are on a par with the bishops and the clergy. On crucial questions the votes are taken by orders, and a resolution is not carried unless it receives the support of a majority in each separate order. Something of the kind is wanted in our Church at the present time. Owing to Parliament having ceased to represent her laity, they require some other formal and recognised channel for making their desires known, and exercising their legitimate influence in the control of Church affairs. The bishops and clergy have their proper mouthpiece in the Convocations. It is true that these at present only imperfectly represent the parochial clergy, but that is a defect which may be remedied by a reform of the Lower Houses. It is generally agreed that this cannot be carried out without the intervention of Parliament in the shape of a declaratory or enabling Act, which should recognise the constitutional power of the Convocations to effect this reform by canon. But if a strenuous effort were made to obtain such an Act, it is

inconceivable that it would be seriously opposed. The simplest way of conferring legislative power on our laity without dislocating our constitution in Church and State would be to give a formal and recognised status to our present Houses of Laymen; and to enact that an ecclesiastical measure, after passing the two Houses of Convocation and the House of Laymen in both Provinces, should be laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament, and that if during, say forty days, no address to the Crown in opposition to it should have been carried in either House, it should become law on receiving the royal assent. It must be evident that the ordeal of being debated in six separate chambers before it reached the stage of being submitted for the approval of Parliament and the Crown would effectually preclude all risk of an ill-considered alteration in our Church laws being too hastily made. The danger would rather lie in the opposite direction, namely, that any reform under such a complicated scheme would be impossible. But a possible deadlock between the two Provinces might be avoided by providing for a joint meeting of the two Convocations and the two Houses of Laymen, where agreement between them could not be arrived at in any other way.

Right of laity to a voice in all matters.

Whether this or any more revolutionary mode be adopted of restoring to the Church laity a direct voice in ecclesiastical matters, one point must be strenuously insisted on—namely, that as no measure should be passed without the consent of the bishops, nor without that of the clergy, so no measure should be passed without the consent of the laity. It is of vital importance to keep this in view, for two years

ago the present House of Laymen of the Southern Province passed a resolution that "the Church of England should, saving the supremacy of the Crown and subject to the veto of Parliament, have freedom for self-regulation by means of reformed Convocations, with the assistance, in matters *other than the definition or interpretation of the faith and doctrine of the Church*, of a representative body or bodies of the faithful laity." The House, in inserting this exception, was probably led astray by the terms of its own informal constitution, which preclude it from trenching on the excepted matters. This prohibition may be justified so long as Parliament remains the constitutional organ through which lay control is exercised on all Church questions, whether doctrinal or practical. But it becomes wholly wrong when it is proposed to confer autonomy on the Church apart from the State, and merely to reserve to Parliament the right of vetoing her legislation in case it should seem to take a course inimical to the interests of the nation. As conclusively shown by the late Archbishop Benson in his posthumous work on Cyprian, the laity were consulted, and their consent obtained, on questions of faith and doctrine, during the first three centuries, which were, in some respects, the best ages of the Church; and it is clear that the practice began with Apostolic times. For whichever may be the true reading of Acts xv. 23, whether that adopted by our Authorised or by our Revised Version, it is evident from the preceding verse that the whole Church at Jerusalem concurred in the decree of the First Council, which is there recorded, and which regulated an important question of doctrine. We also find the whole Church con-

sulted as to the first appointment of deacons, and deliberating upon St Peter's conduct in baptising the uncircumcised household of Cornelius and eating with them. It is clear from Acts xxi. 18-24 that the elders did not feel able of their own authority to pass upon St Paul's conduct a sentence of acquittal and approval which would bind the entire Church, and that apostle himself directs the whole body of Christians at Corinth to inflict discipline on the incestuous member of their community. Any different arrangement in our own Church would be contrary to the existing constitution of the Churches of the Anglican communion in Ireland, the Colonies, and the United States. It would, moreover, be as baleful in practice as it would be wrong in principle. For, in the first place, the exclusion of the Church laity from any voice on questions of faith and doctrine would seriously hamper their deliberations on points of ritual or discipline. How, for instance, could they debate such a practical subject as the observance of Sunday without bringing the question of doctrine into consideration?[1] And, in the second place, a measure involving an altered definition of faith or doctrine which had not been submitted to the Church laity would deservedly run the

[1] A suggestive object-lesson on this point is afforded by the proceedings of the Southern House of Laymen in 1896, in which notice had been given of a motion that it was of grave importance that the question of the remarriage in the Church of England of persons divorced outside the jurisdiction of English law should be seriously considered, and that his Grace the Archbishop be asked to take this matter into his consideration with a view to the discontinuance of the issue of licences for such remarriage. An amendment to this motion—"To insert after the words 'English law' the words 'and all persons divorced in England,'" was ruled out of order by the chairman as touching upon doctrine, which the House, by its constitution, was precluded from discussing.

gravest risk of being, on that very account, vetoed by Parliament, although it might be of such a nature that if the laity of the Church had been formally consulted upon it, they would have given it their hearty approval. There need be no fear that the laity would introduce any dangerous ecclesiastical novelties. They could not, of course, do so without the consent of both bishops and clergy. But, in fact, experience has shown that they are invariably a conservative element in Church councils.

§ 2. *Representation of the Laity and the Qualifications for it.*

Mode of introducing lay element.

Such, then, being the powers to which the laity of the Church are entitled, the next question is, By whom and in what manner are they to be exercised? The necessity for any change at all is based upon the assumption that the present arrangement under which the lay element in the control of Church affairs is exercised by the State Legislature, and is shared in by the whole people of the United Kingdom, Scotch and Irish as well as English, irrespective of their creed or no creed, is unsatisfactory, and ought to be altered. We may, however, admit this and yet most earnestly desire, in the interests of the nation, if not of the Church herself, that the connection between Church and State, between religion and our civil administration, which has existed ever since England became a kingdom, should not be severed. Dominated by this desire, we shall inquire, not what is the ideal mode of constituting the lay factor in our ecclesiastical organisation, but how we may adequately introduce it without resort to that destructive

process which is designated by the ugly name of Disestablishment. Our aim, therefore, will naturally be to retain, as far as possible, existing machinery, and only to make such modifications and introduce such novelties as are absolutely necessary for the purpose before us.

Parochial organisation.

To begin, then, with the parishes. Shall the recognised lay element be territorial, as at present, or congregational? And shall baptism and nominal Church membership, or confirmation, or regular communicating, be the qualification for exercising the ecclesiastical franchise? There is much to be urged in favour of the congregational claim, and a method will be suggested later on for partially meeting it. But while the Church remains a national institution it ought clearly to continue fundamentally parochial, and the vestries of ancient parishes and the quasi-vestries of new parishes are ready to our hand as lay ecclesiastical bodies. It is true that at present, as we have already seen, the former are incrusted with anomalies, and both the former and the latter are open to Church-folk and Dissenters alike. But the anomalies are capable of removal, and the non-Church element is susceptible of elimination. In 1895 a Bill to effect the former of these processes was actually introduced into Parliament by Professor Jebb, with the hearty approval of Archbishop Benson. This Bill proposed that there should be maintained in connection with the church of every ancient and new parish an ecclesiastical vestry, consisting of the incumbent and parishioners of the ecclesiastical parish or district attached to the church. Select vestries, and plural voting according to rateable value, were to be abolished in respect of ecclesiastical

affairs; and parishioners were defined as persons registered in either the Local Government register of electors or the Parliamentary register of electors, in respect of property or other qualification within the area. The Bill, unfortunately, during that session never got beyond a first reading in the Commons, and no fresh attempt to carry it has since been made; but it remains a witness to the simple and easy way in which, so far as our parishes are concerned, the existing machinery might be accommodated to the new demands of the Church laity.

Qualification of vestrymen.

It is true that the Bill contained no proposal to exclude the Nonconformist element from the reformed vestries. Archbishop Benson held a very strong opinion that to do so would not only imperil the national position of the Church, but would also hinder the spread of her influence among the people. This contention is, no doubt, supported by the fact that, under the New Parishes Acts, the quasi-vestries of these parishes, which have never had any other than ecclesiastical functions, are open to all householders alike, irrespective of any religious qualification. It must, however, be admitted that, if there is to be any recognition of the claim of the Church by her bishops, clergy, and laity, to regulate her own affairs, the retention by Nonconformists of a voice in her parochial administration cannot be consistently advocated. The bill requires to be amended by at least a proviso that only such of the parishioners thereby constituted the vestry, as are members of the Church of England, shall be entitled to attend and take part in its proceedings. There would be nothing absolutely novel in this restriction, for in old days a parishioner who was in

arrear in payment of the church-rate was debarred from voting in the vestry.

But is this qualification sufficiently strict, or ought there to be a still further limitation? We have seen that Church membership is, in law, an extremely vague term, and there are many who hold strongly that mere nominal Churchmanship, irrespectively of the individual's religious or moral life, is not a sufficient qualification for sharing in Church government. The revival of lay power in ecclesiastical matters ought, they urge, to be accompanied by a revival of lay discipline. And so we find it suggested in one direction that none but confirmed persons should possess the lay franchise. Others go further, and maintain that it ought only to be accorded to communicants. They do not, in fact, shrink from reviving in this connection the sacramental test; for they argue that the temptation to its abuse, which produced such scandals when it was imposed in reference to civil matters, would have no existence when it had relation only to the exercise of ecclesiastical functions. But there are several objections to the adoption of either of these courses. In the first place, no register exists of either confirmed persons or communicants, and if the validity of a resolution was challenged on the ground that the persons voting for it had not been confirmed or were not regular communicants, it would be extremely difficult and costly, and might even be impossible, to prove the qualification of the individuals by whom it had been carried. Further, if we were to lay down participation in any religious rite, whether confirmation or Communion, as the condition of admission to the vestries, we should revolutionise these bodies as regards not only those

who would be thereby excluded from them, but also those who must be included in them. Under such a system it would be logically impossible to restrict membership to householders. It would be necessary to admit all resident Churchmen and, we may add, Churchwomen, who satisfied the prescribed religious qualification, independently of their position in the civil community. We might thus have several members of the same family or household, including servants, taking part in the proceedings—an arrangement which might practically have the effect of restoring the plural vote to the rich man in another shape, and could not be regarded as desirable. Moreover, if Churchwomen were admitted to the franchise without regard to whether they were householders or not, we might not improbably find that in many parishes a majority of the voting power was in the hands of the feminine sex. Lastly, we could not even thus altogether get rid of the unworthy element, for it is not every confirmee, or even every communicant, who is a loyal and consistent Churchman.

The fundamental parochial organisation of the Church is so important, that it is worth while to inquire how it is arranged in the disestablished Church of Ireland and in the Colonies. In the Church of Ireland the vestry of each parish consists of every man of twenty-one years and upwards who applies to be registered as a vestryman, and declares himself a member of the Church of Ireland, and is usually resident in the parish, or is possessed of landed or house property therein of the clear yearly value of at least £10, or is a habitual attendant at the parish church. Any Diocesan Synod may require, as a further qualification for a

vestryman within the diocese, that he shall be a subscriber to the church funds; and the diocese of Glendalough has decided that no person who does not subscribe at least 2s. 6d. a-year to those funds shall be registered as a vestryman. There is likewise in each parish a select vestry, consisting of the incumbent, the curates (if any), and the churchwardens, and not more than twelve other persons, elected annually by the vestry out of their own number. Subject to any regulations in reference thereto made by the Synod of the Diocese, the select vestry has the control and charge of all parochial charities and church funds not held on any trust inconsistent with that control, and is required to provide out of the funds at its disposal the requisites for divine service, and to keep the church and other parish buildings in repair. It has also the right of appointing the church and parish officers and servants, and pays them out of the funds under its control. Churchmanship is thus virtually made the qualification for membership of the vestry, from which women are shut out altogether. The practice of the Church in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa is similar. The parochial franchise is accorded to male adults who declare themselves Church members, although only communicants are eligible to serve on Church councils. It is clear that if any ecclesiastical qualification is adopted for the admission of the laity to a share of Church government, the feminine element must be excluded, since in this country, at any rate, it might otherwise swamp the men.

The Irish and Colonial franchise may be right for a disestablished or non-established Church; but, so long as our

Church retains its connection with the State, the householder franchise, with a condition of Church membership superadded, appears to be the correct principle; and under that franchise qualified women would continue to be members of the vestry, as they are at present. We should thus maintain the national and territorial character of the Church, without disregarding her rightful claim to freedom from the interference of outsiders. It is extremely unlikely that, if such a constitution were adopted, parishioners who were not Church members would attempt to invade the vestry; but, if they did, a resolution proved to have been carried by their votes would be liable to be set aside as void; and power might be given to the chairman of a vestry meeting to require any suspected intruder, before voting, to sign a declaration that he was a member of the Church.

Parochial councils.

But the claims of earnest Church people who are not householders to a voice in Church government, and the exclusion of the careless and indifferent from any active share in it, may be effected in another way. Just as in Ireland the executive power is in the select vestry, and just as, under the Local Government Act of 1894, the civil affairs of a rural parish are controlled by a parish council elected by the parish meeting, so it would be well that the ecclesiastical powers mentioned above as being legitimately required to be intrusted to the laity of a parish should be exercised, not by the vestry, but by a small body of councillors elected by them. There should be in every parish, or in every parish where the vestry desire it, a parochial church council, consisting

of the incumbent and all curates holding the bishop's licence, and the churchwardens and sidesmen as *ex officio* members, and a certain number of lay persons elected annually by the vestry. With our present subdivision of parishes, and the grouping of the very poor in some and the more leisured classes in others, the time has surely come when the legal requirement of residence in the parish as a qualification for holding the office of churchwarden should be removed; and in the case of the elected parish councillors there should be no condition that they should necessarily be members of the vestry, or even inhabitants of the parish. It would thus be possible to combine the parochial with the congregational principle. The former would be represented by the vestry, the initial ecclesiastical organism, while the latter would find a place in the constitution of the parochial council; for the Churchfolk of the parish would possess, and would, no doubt, in proper cases exercise, the power of electing to seats in the council active and earnest members of the congregation who either did not reside in the parish, or, though residing in it, were not civilly qualified to be vestrymen.

The relations between the incumbent and his curates, and between the clerical and lay elements in the parochial council, would be placed upon a proper footing if it were laid down that, in case of a difference in opinion, the voting should be by orders, and no resolution should be carried unless (*a*) a majority of each order voted for it, and (*b*) the incumbent assented to it; with a proviso, however, that if a resolution was supported by a majority of one order only, or was passed by both orders but vetoed by the incumbent,

the bishop might in his discretion, if appealed to, declare the resolution to be carried.

Sacramental test for church officials.

In considering the composition of the parochial councils, we are again confronted by the question whether the lay members of them should be required to be communicants; and it will be convenient to discuss it in reference not to those bodies exclusively, but to all the lay offices and councils which may be created under a reformed Church constitution. Assuming that we are agreed as to mere Church membership being a sufficient qualification for the exercise of the initial lay franchise, there is yet much to be urged in favour of restricting the tenure of any Church office, or of a seat on any Church council, to regular communicants, on the ground that they are the only persons who are really fulfilling their religious duties as Church members. On the other hand, we should not exclude all unworthy individuals by imposing this additional test. Integrity of life, and true loyalty to the Church and to her Divine Head, are no more to be found in every communicant than they are in every baptised person. Moreover, precedent is against the requirement. As we have already seen, the present law prescribes with reference to the churchwardens of new parishes, who have never had any other than ecclesiastical functions, that they shall be members of the Church of England, and requires nothing further. Is this enactment to be amended? If not, it will scarcely be consistent to impose the sacramental test in the case of others, when it is not insisted on in the case of churchwardens. The Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, is not usually considered a model of ecclesiastical

legislation; and no great stress, therefore, can be laid on the fact that the judge appointed under it was only required to be a member of the Church of England. But the Ecclesiastical Courts Bill, which was introduced into Parliament by Archbishop Benson in 1888, and is now again commended by the Bishops to the consideration of Churchmen, proposes the same qualification for the judges of the Final Court of Appeal; and if it is conceded that this is sufficient in their case, it will be difficult to argue that it is insufficient in the case of laymen, whose Church functions are to be of a far less important character. On the whole, it would seem best to maintain throughout the simple requirement of Church membership. If this were done, it would seldom, if ever, happen that a person who was not a communicant would come forward for election to an office in the Church or a seat on her councils, or that, if he came forward, he would be selected by his fellow-Churchmen to occupy it.

Lay Legislative Assembly.

When this point has been settled, the construction of the lay body or bodies to which a share in the government of the Church is to be entrusted will remain to be arranged. Shall there be one united body or a separate assembly for each Province? Shall the laity sit with the clergy or form separate houses? Unfortunately we have here no such constitutional foundation to build upon as we possess for parochial purposes in the shape of the vestry. In the machinery of the Church as a whole, the only present recognised bodies are the exclusively clerical Convocations of the two Provinces. The Houses of Laymen which have recently been associated with them possess no formal or legal

status. Their existence, therefore, affords no practical assistance towards the attainment of the object in view, though it supplies us with some hints as to the lines on which we should proceed. The Convocations are, and always have been, exclusively clerical assemblies. To introduce a lay element into them would not be to reform but to revolutionise them—to create, in fact, altogether new bodies in their place. The policy of the Church Reform League seems to be the right one, namely, to obtain self-government for the Church by means of reformed Houses of Convocation (thoroughly representative, and with power for the Convocations of the two Provinces to sit together if desired), together with a representative body or bodies of the laity. In fact, the existing Houses of Laymen should be given a recognised status and legal powers, with a provision that they should sit and vote together whenever the two Convocations did so. But for this purpose it is necessary that the mode of election to them should be formally settled. At present their members are chosen by the lay members of the Diocesan Conferences. It will probably be best that this arrangement should continue—just as in Ireland the lay members of each Diocesan Synod elect the lay representatives of the diocese in the General Synod. This will involve giving a legal status to the Diocesan Conferences as well. The only other feasible alternative would be to enact that the vestry of each parish should choose an elector, and that the parochial electors in each archdeaconry should select lay representatives to sit for the archdeaconry in the Provincial House of Laymen. But this would needlessly introduce a novel feature into our

ecclesiastical organisation. Under the new *régime*, the Diocesan Conferences would not cease to exist: rather might we expect them to be endued with new life and vigour. Why, then, deprive them of a power analogous to that which they now possess, and create an entirely new machinery for the sole purpose of exercising it?

Lay Representation.

Two more points will require to be settled. There must be a legally established link between the vestries and the Diocesan Conferences. The existing practice as to this varies in different dioceses. In some the parishes send lay representatives direct to the conference; in others they elect to a ruridecanal conference, and the lay members of this body elect laymen as representatives to the Diocesan Conference. There would be no absolute necessity to establish uniformity in this respect. Each diocese might be left to continue such arrangements as best corresponded with local convenience and sentiment. But on another point, in order to secure fairness of representation throughout the country, it would be requisite to lay down a uniform rule. The lay representation of each diocese must be apportioned to its magnitude. As long as Great Britain lags behind all other civilised communities in taking no account of religious profession in the census of her people, we can form no accurate estimate of the number of Churchmen in each part of the country, and we must, therefore, base our calculations on the whole population. A fair representation would, perhaps, be given to each diocese, if, according to the latest census, one lay representative in the Houses of Laymen was assigned to the first 100,000 or under of the population, and an additional representative

for every complete 100,000 up to 500,000, and one to every complete 500,000 above that number. On this footing the diocese of London, which is the most populous, would have ten representatives, and Sodor and Man, which has the least population, one; while Bangor, Hereford, and St Asaph would have two each. Manchester would have nine, York, Durham, Lichfield, Liverpool, Ripon, Rochester, St Albans, and Worcester six apiece, and the other dioceses a number varying between five and three.

Conclusion.

It is satisfactory to reflect that amid the wide differences of opinion at present existing among Churchmen on other topics, we are all substantially agreed that the laity of the Church ought to have greater legal power in the management of her affairs. It has been the endeavour of the foregoing pages to indicate the directions in which that power is required, and the lines upon which it should be granted. The concession of it cannot long be safely delayed. The present state of crisis or unrest in our Church is, no doubt, due in great part to the attempted intrusion of an alien element into her doctrine and ritual. But it is due also to the fact that her doctrine and ritual are regulated by formularies and rubrics drawn up some three centuries and a-half ago and scarcely touched since. Our 20th Article declares that within certain limits "the Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies and authority in controversies of faith"; and the 34th Article adds that "every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority; so that all things be done to edifying." But our Church at the present time has no machinery for

exercising these powers or exerting this authority. Her circumstances and requirements have changed, and modes of thought and forms of expression have undergone modification. A rigid observance of the rubrics and of the prescribed order of the Prayer-book is not only discarded by those of us who would reintroduce medieval customs or borrow modern rites from the contemporary practice of the Church of Rome: it has been found difficult, if not impossible, even by those who are desirous of adhering strictly to the standard of doctrine and worship adopted by the Reformers. And neither on one side nor on the other have modern ideas been able to fit themselves exactly to the theological verbiage and standpoint of the Elizabethan age. The divergence has led to appeals to the Church courts; and the decisions of these courts are not only final as to the particular cases in which they are delivered, but lay down the law for the whole Church without possibility of reversal. In civil matters, when a similar divergence takes place between the existing law and current public opinion, it is the duty of the courts to decide in accordance with the law. But recourse is at once had to Parliament to alter the law. If we could imagine the sittings of Parliament being suspended for a quarter of a century there would soon occur decisions of the secular courts, perfectly correct from a legal point of view, but out of harmony with the sentiments of the nation or a portion of it; and as there would be no opportunity of correcting or attempting to correct these decisions by legislation, they would be complained of, and be accused of having been prompted by considerations of policy rather than of law, by those who were dissatisfied with

them, just as is the case with the decisions of the ecclesiastical courts at the present time. These courts, in fact, are now relied on to perform a legislative as well as a judicial function. No reform of them will enable them to do this satisfactorily. The only effectual cure for the existing ecclesiastical derangement is to establish a satisfactory Church legislature which, with the assent of the Crown, and subject to the veto of Parliament, shall be able to review, and, if deemed expedient, alter the law, leaving to the courts their proper duty of expounding it as it stands, but possessing the power of modifying it if the decisions of the courts are not in harmony with what the Church considers that the law ought to be. In this legislature it is essential that representatives of the laity should have a co-ordinate place with the episcopate and representatives of the clergy.

AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED.

By MONTAGUE BARLOW, M.A., LL.M.

SINCE 1886, when the late Lord Selborne wrote his classic work in defence of the Established Church, the nature of the attack on the Establishment has entirely changed: the danger now comes not from foes without so much as from friends within; and the enemy to-day is he of our own household. It has been said that British institutions are apt to be active in proportion to the criticism they encounter: hostility arouses enthusiasm, stimulates activity, promotes self-reform. Candid friends discovered that the City companies were becoming a public scandal, and the companies have entered on a new life of active usefulness in consequence: the blood of martyrs is proverbially the life of the Church.

Present attack on the Establishment.

But the hostility which renovates comes from outside, —insidious attack from within can only destroy.

Taking the words of Mr G. W. Russell in a recent number of the 'Nineteenth Century'[1] as significant of

[1] February 1899. "Whatever the upshot of the present controversies, it will always seem to us that the great issue which lies before the Church

the attitude of many within the Church, it is obvious that the danger of Disestablishment is much more serious now than it was thirteen years ago: the whole theory of the Establishment is on its trial in the eyes of friends and foes alike.

The purpose of these pages is to explain, so far as space will allow, what the exact facts of the Establishment, as at present in existence in England,[1] are. We say facts advisedly, for the issue is one of fact. Long words like "sacerdotalism" or "Erastianism" carry us no further: if they break no bones, they equally solve no difficulties. An attempt is also made to sketch the position of Churches in Scotland and Ireland, and their relation to the State; and finally, to suggest some evils which would inevitably follow on Disestablishment.

§ 1. The General Relation of a Church to the State.

The problem of the relation of Church and State in a Christian land is nothing new or unusual. So long as either has existed there has been difficulty in arriving at a working theory of the relations between the two. "It may be taken for granted," says Bishop Stubbs,[2] "that between the extreme claims made by the advocates of

of England is perfectly expressed in the words of Mr Gladstone, written half a century ago, 'You have our decision, take your own: choose between the mess of pottage and the birthright of Christ.'" This, with all respect to the great statesman, is not the choice at all.

[1] For the historical steps by which the English Church arrived at its present settlement, see Appendix.

[2] Stubbs, Constitutional History (1878), vol. iii. p. 288.

the two there can never be even an approximate reconciliation." [1]

Nor is it the fact of either Christianity or Establishment that gives occasion for this kind of conflict. In Catholic countries the Church is not, of necessity, an established Church. In India the prevailing religions are not Christian; yet in each case the statesman has to come in contact with religious communities: religion and law may each claim the same sphere.[2]

§ 2. Types of Church and State Relationship.

(*a*) State unity with one religion.

From the point of view of constitutional theory we can figure to ourselves two entirely opposed types of Church and State relations. Granted that in a given State only one form of religious belief is known, to which every subject adheres, then the Church and the State are different aspects of the same body,—they connote one another. Every member of the Church is a member of the State: defection from the ranks of the Church is apt to be treated as treason to the State.

In Anglo-Saxon times in England the Church and State

[1] The bibliography on the subject is of course enormous. For the older theories see Hooker, Warburton, works; Paley, Moral and Political Philosophy, cl. x.; Gladstone, Church and State (1839). See also Church, Relations between Church and State. (Republished 1881.) Much of the writing is very vague—*e.g.*, Bluntschli argues that a union is natural, the State being a male person and the Church a female person (Theory of the State, p. 15).

[2] See Ilbert, Government of India (1898), p. 256, and the Indian Endowment Act of 1863, repealing earlier Acts, which made the administration of religious trusts for the support of mosques, provision of sacred bulls, &c., Government work (Agnew, Trusts in British India (1882), p. 396).

were practically identical: the Witan legislated freely alike in civil and ecclesiastical matters: it was composed of bishops and abbots, as well as of ealdormen and thegns; the county court was also the Church's court—bishop and sheriff administered clerical and secular justice seated side by side.[1]

(*b*) State indifference to all religions.

The second type, separated as far as the poles asunder from the first, is found where there are many forms of religious belief existing in the State, with complete liberty to all subjects to attach themselves to any or none as they please. Each religious body or association is equal in the eye of the law, and none can claim any particular connection or recognition at the hands of the State. Organised associations for religious purposes are in a similar position to any other voluntary association of citizens, a company or a club. The State has no concern in supervising or maintaining the particular tenets which any one such voluntary religious association is founded to propagate, and it could not promote the aims of all religious bodies equally, for unfortunately those aims conflict. The dilemma of Robert Louis Stevenson, who, on entering a Roman Catholic church abroad, was urged to subscribe for the conversion of Scotland, would be as nothing compared with the dilemma of the State if it took an active share in advancing the doctrines of all different sects.[2]

[1] See Freeman, Norman Conquest (1867), vol. i. p. 405; Taswell-Langmead (1890), p. 75; Pollock and Maitland, History of English Law, vol. i. pp. 16, 548; and Cnut's writ to archbishops and Thurcyl the earl (Stubbs, Select Charters, p. 75); Church, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[2] Such voluntary religious bodies are of course liable, like secular associations, to have their tenets examined by the ordinary courts of law. See below, § 4.

This is the position of all religious bodies in Ireland, the Colonies, and America.

(c) Intermediate types.

In the wide middle region between these two poles we may find many varieties. The Church or religious body may be, at any rate in theory, coterminous with the State, but by no means identical with it. The medieval Church in England, while approximating more to the first or unified type, was yet, owing to the legislative authority claimed by the Pope for the whole of Christendom, together with the enormous power accruing from the carrying of appeals to Rome,[1] more in the position for many purposes of an independent State.[2] In most Catholic countries the relationship has been defined by means of a formal arrangement or concordat, usually securing privileges to the Roman Church as distinguished from other religious bodies. Portugal entered into such an arrangement so early as 1288, and well-known examples are the French agreements of 1801 and 1817, and the Belgian of 1827.[3]

§ 3. Present Position in England.

The present controversy has revealed startling differences of opinion as to what the relation of the English Church to

[1] Maitland, Canon Law, 1898. Not only was the Pope the court of appeal, he was also the "universal ordinary" or court of first instance (p. 114).

[2] Canon Law, p. 100. The Church had its own legislator, its own law, its own lawyers, its own prisons; though "with squeamish phrases" it pronounced sentence of death for desertion.

[3] See L'État et l'Église, by Moulart, Docteur en Droit Canon: Louvain, 1895, p. 620. The atmosphere of the subject is somewhat difficult for English lungs to breathe (see p. 625, and the argument that the Pope is really bound by the concordats, and is not justified in repudiating them at pleasure).

the State at present is. To some they are entirely distinct entities, with a slight connecting link, separate but adjacent islands, united by a drawbridge which can be pulled up at pleasure without affecting the stability of either. Others regard the Established Church as a sort of inferior department of State—a department subject to a rigid parliamentary control, but without any parliamentary chief to protect it, and incapable of corporate action apart from the House of Commons. It is hard to say which view is the more incorrect: the two bodies, in fact, like trees whose stems are interlaced, are knit by the growth and common life of centuries, not to be riven asunder without serious harm to both.[1]

The Crown as a link.

The main link by which the Church and State are connected is the Crown. The Church cannot legislate in Convocation without royal permission; in the executive department the Crown nominates the great officers, the bishops and deans; in judicial matters the Queen is—though exactly to what extent is disputed—over all persons in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, within her dominions supreme; the law of the Church is part of the law of the land; the final court of appeal in matters ecclesiastical is the Queen in Council.[2] On the other hand, the

[1] Anson, Law and Custom of Constitution, part ii. p. 399; Taswell-Langmead, Constitutional History, p. 8.

[2] Anson, *op. cit.*, p. 399. The tendency of modern legislation is to substitute the Archbishop as the final court in some cases—*e.g.*, revocation of a curate's licence under 1 & 2 Vict. c. 106, sec. 98, Poole *v.* Bishop of London, 14 Moore, P. C., 1861; appeal against refusal to institute, Benefices Act, 1898, s. 3 (2) (ii); but these are cases of appeal from the exercise of a discretionary power.

monarch must be a member of the Established Church.[1] In virtue of the Establishment, twenty-six of the senior bishops sit to advise the Crown in the House of Lords.

The position of the Crown in connection with the Church is the result of a series of Acts of Parliament, mostly passed during the Reformation period, and requires treatment under distinct heads.[2]

I. *Titular Position of Crown.*

As one of the moves in his battle with the Pope, Henry VIII. secured the passing in 1534 of an Act known as the "Supreme Head" Act,[3] because it enacted that the king "shall be takyn acceptyd and reputed the *onely supreme heed in erthe* of the Churche of England, callyd Anglicana Ecclesia." The Act further expressly gave to the Crown "full power and auctorite from tyme to tyme to visite, represse, redresse, reforme, ordre, correct, restrayne, and amende all suche errours, heresies, abuses, offences, contemptes, and enormyties whatsoeuer they be whiche by any maner spirituall auctoryte or jurisdicion ought or maie lawfullye be reformed, repressyd, ordred," &c. Repealed by Mary, the Act was not revived by Elizabeth. In its place

[1] 12 & 13 Will. III. c. 2, sec. 2. The coronation oath runs: "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and *the Protestant Reformed religion established by law?*" &c.

[2] A complete examination of the Reformation statutes is here impossible. See Tomlinson, 'Lay Judges in Church Courts,' for an excellent summary.

[3] 26 Hen. VIII. c. 1. The Convocations had already in 1531 recognised the king as "Supreme head of the Church and clergy," but with the significant addition, "so far as is allowed by the law of Christ." The Act of Parliament was expressed to be for "corroboracion and confirmacion" of the resolution of Convocation.

Elizabeth accepted the title of "*the onely supreme gouernor* of this realme . . . as well in all spirituall or ecclesiastical thinges or causes as temporal";[1] but at the same time the second part of Henry's Act, giving spiritual jurisdiction to the Crown, is not only re-enacted, but its scope slightly extended, by the addition of the word "scismes," and the Crown was empowered to appoint commissioners to exercise this spiritual jurisdiction. Under this section commissioners were appointed, and sat regularly for eighty years, with the name of the High Commission.[2]

These words "supreme head," "supreme governor," are of course vague, and a vast amount of "ecclesiastical Billingsgate" has been contributed to their elucidation. No doubt the actual title claimed by Elizabeth and by Henry was different, and much has been made of this difference. Elizabeth's tact surrendered the shadow, but grasped the substance. She may have withdrawn a title obnoxious to an ecclesiastical party with one hand: she certainly secured a definite and increased spiritual jurisdiction with the other. But the question of titles is, after all, a very barren one. Queen Victoria became Empress of India in 1876: her powers of sovereignty over her Indian subjects were just

[1] 1 Eliz. c. 1, s. ix. These were the words of the oath of supremacy. Sec. viii. of the same act, which is headed "All spirituall jurisdiction united to the Crown," runs: "That suche jurisdictions priveleges superiorities preheminences spirituall and ecclesiastical as by *any* spirituall or ecclesiastical Power or auctoritie [*i.e.*, not only the Pope's] hathe hertofore bene *or may lawfully be exercised* . . . for the Reformacion order and correction . . . of all manner of Errours, *Heresies, Scismes*, abuses offences contemptes and enormities, shall for ever by auctoritie of this present Parliament *be united and annexed to the Imperiall Crowne of this Realme.*"—Statutes of the Realm. See Hale, 'Supremacy of the Crown,' p. 13.

[2] This court was abolished by 16 Car. I. c. xi., 1640.

the same in 1880 as in 1870, no more and no less. The intricate interlacing of relations, functions, powers, between Church and State cannot be expressed in a phrase or summed up in a title. The question is entirely one of fact. What powers over the Church are by law secured to the Crown—over the legislature, the executive, the courts of the body ecclesiastical ?

II. *Judiciary.*

From the conquest to the Reformation the Church Courts consisted mainly of three: the Archdeacons' Court, the Bishops' or Consistory Court, and the Archbishops' Court, called the Court of Arches in the Southern Province, the Chancery Court of York in the Northern. The clergy, under the Conqueror's Edict, made good their right to exclusive jurisdiction in their own courts over their own order: in addition, these courts secured large powers over the laity (*a*) for ecclesiastical offences, heresy, failure to pay tithe, &c.; (*b*) cases of immorality, drunkenness, unchastity, &c.; (*c*) temporal matters intimately connected with the moral or religious side of life, divorce and nullity of marriage, wills and succession to personal property at death. In all these cases adjudicated on by the English Ecclesiastical Courts, the practice arose of carrying appeals to Rome, which also claimed, by means of the appointment of legates, a concurrent local jurisdiction of first instance. The whole process of appealing to Rome was costly and corrupt.

The statute in restraint of Appeals[1] (1533), the immedi-

[1] 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12. Appendix IX. p. 179.

ate occasion for which was Catherine's appeal [1] to Rome in the divorce suit, provided that in future all "causes testamentary, causes of matrimonye and devorces, right of tithes, oblacions and obvencions," should be heard in the king's courts spiritual and temporal; appeals should lie to the Archbishop, "without any other or furder processe." [2] The Act thus recites specifically those matters in which appeals to Rome were common; the intention of Parliament was, however, doubtless to include appeals of every kind, and the Act of the next year for the submission of the clergy [3] (1534) is careful to make this clear. From the

[1] Convocations had previously resolved that Arthur's prior marriage with Catherine was valid and not dispensable by the Pope.

[2] Appeals, however, "touching the king" were to lie to the Upper House of Convocation. This particular machinery for appeal does not appear ever to have been used (Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, p. 39). It is often said that all the statute did was "to sweep away the appellate business concerning property and wills and the laws of marriage which had grown up in the Middle Ages, and deny that it appertained to the Pope by inherent right" (Wakeman, p. 218). But the heading of the statute is significant: "An acte that the appeles in suche cases as have ben used to be pursued to the See of Rome shall not be from hensforth had ne used but wythin this realm." There is no doubt that appeals for heresy lay to Rome. See next note.

[3] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19. Professor Stubbs says, Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, p. 39, this Act 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, did not "explicitly make any matter capable of appeal that was not so before; and if heresy and misconduct of divine service were not matters of appeal before, they are not now made so." There can be no doubt, however, such appeal did lie for heresy (see Mr Droop's evidence, vol. ii. pp. 94-96). Cranmer was anathematised for heresy under the authority of the Pope, who sent from Rome a sentence deposing him. This Act of Mary's reign shows what the practice was before 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19 (see for a full account Tomlinson, 'Primates' Bill Examined,' p. 7). The English Canonists had no doubt that the Pope could *legislate* for the punishment of heresy in England. See Maitland, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Even supposing no appellate jurisdiction in heresy was transferred to the Crown by 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, in any case, as we saw, 1 Eliz. c. 1 gives the Crown an original heresy jurisdiction.

feast of Easter 1534, "no maner of appeales of what nature or condicion soever" were to be had or made out of the "king's domynyons to the Byshop of Rome"; but every kind of appeal was to be made in the same form as that prescribed in the previous year for "causes of matrimonye, tythes, oblacions, and obvencions." "For lacke of justice" in the Archbishop's court, however, "the parties greved" could "*appele*" to the king in Chancery, whereon the king was to appoint a Commission to review the case, whose decision was to be final. Commissioners were appointed from time to time and sat under the title of the Court of Delegates, and from this court the present appellate jurisdiction of the Privy Council is lineally descended.[1] The inferior Church courts were unaffected by the Reformation, save that Parliament declared lay doctors of civil law competent to preside.[2]

Court of Delegates.

The method of procedure in appeals thus set up was approved by the Church, as evidenced by the first two canons of 1603. The constitution of the court was almost entirely lay, even when dealing with the clergy and clerical offences. Of 109 cases of clerical appeals from 1586 to 1838, ecclesiastics sat alone in no single one, lay civilians always being present: in 83, common law judges also took

[1] 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, sec. 4. The commissioners were to be appointed under the Great Seal, "lyke as in the case of appeal from the Admyrall Court." In spite of the express words of the statute, a subsequent Commission of Review could on report of the Lord Chancellor be appointed.

[2] 37 Hen. VIII. c. 17, giving to married lay doctors of civil law power to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction (in opposition to the canon law), also ascribes to the king "full power to correct all manner of heresies, . . . and to exercise all other manner of jurisdiction commonly called ecclesiastical jurisdiction."

part; and in 55 no one but lay judges appear. Generally a very common proportion was three or four bishops, four common law judges, and four or five civilians.[1] The delegates heard appeals directly from the Arches or Archbishops', and indirectly from the Consistory or Bishops', courts, and dealt with all kinds of matters[2] coming within the power of those courts, whether civil, such as wills or matrimonial causes, or more distinctly ecclesiastical matters, such as tithe or patronage, and even criminal suits, embracing all "causes of correction instituted against either clergymen or laymen for any offence against ecclesiastical law"—simony, for instance, or heresy. Of distinctly heresy cases, seven are given by Rothery[3] in his Report, reprinted by the Commissioners in 1883. So long as the court of High Commission sat (*i.e.*, down to 1640), cases of doctrine would naturally be carried before that court and not before the Delegates, which fact partially accounts for the small number of such appeals coming before the latter.

Thus from Tudor times to our own the inferior and superior courts of our Church were, in accordance with the Reformation settlement, largely or entirely lay courts, whose judges were appointed by the King, Chancellor, or Bishop, in virtue of powers conferred by Parliament with the consent of the Church.

Change to the Privy Council.

A Royal Commission sat in 1830 to consider the whole question of ecclesiastical courts, and especially of their

[1] See Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1832, Report, p. 20.

[2] Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, Rothery's Report, p. 188, vol. i. Broderick and Fremantle, 'Judgments of Privy Council,' Introduction, p. 51.

[3] P. 188. Bishops sat in all but one of these, but the laymen were always in a large majority.

jurisdiction over the laity in civil causes of wills or divorce. By a special report[1] the Commissioners recommended that it would be "expedient to abolish the jurisdiction hitherto exercised by judges delegate, and to transfer the right of hearing appeals to the Privy Council."[2] This report was signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and three bishops, as well as other Commissioners, and no special exception was made of offences of the clergy. In the general report, however, issued three weeks later, nine pages[3] are devoted to "ecclesiastical offences committed by the clergy," including doctrinal offences — such as "disregard of the sacred obligations into which they have entered on becoming ministers of the Church of England."

Such offences are said to be rare. Where they do occur, the restoration of the personal jurisdiction of the bishop, with an appeal to the Archbishop, is recommended; but here no further appeal to the Privy Council is mentioned.

It is interesting to note exactly what followed, for there is much misconception on the point. First, the jurisdiction of the delegates generally is transferred, as from 1st February 1833, to the Privy Council,[4] no exception being made in the Act of clerical offences or of appeals in such

[1] Dated 31st January 1831.

[2] Some changes were to be made in the constitution of that body. The reasons for preferring the Privy Council were, that it was a more responsible and permanent body, while its proceedings would be more public and less costly. The Judicial Committee was constituted, in pursuance of the Commissioners' suggestions, by 3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 41.

[3] The remaining sixty-five deal with the reform of the civil and secular jurisdiction already mentioned.

[4] 2 & 3 Will. IV. c. 92, sec. 3.

cases. The whole question of clerical misconduct is felt to be thorny, and can be left for future debate — more especially as Parliament has been told the cases are rare. The matter is, in fact, discussed for some years; strong feeling is evoked; petitions are presented to Parliament; more than one bill is introduced.[1]

Eventually a compromise is arrived at: the leaders of the Church lay their heads together, the bishops can announce in the House of Lords that, "without the sacrifice of any principle being made by any one," they can "agree together." On June 25, 1840, the Lord Chancellor introduces the bill embodying the bishops' agreement, which passes into law: this reserves to the bishop the personal jurisdiction of first instance over the clergy recommended by the Commissioners, but allows in every case an appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council;[2] the Archbishop of Canterbury, "on the part of the clergy, gave his cordial approbation to the bill," as did the Bishop of Exeter, the only other prelate who took part in the debate.

[1] Hansard, vol. liii. p. 799: "The Bishop of Exeter had several petitions to present to their Lordships on a subject which had excited much *painful interest*—he alluded to the subject of Church discipline." These petitions were in favour of preserving the "ancient jurisdiction of the bishops," apparently in the manner suggested by the 1831 Commission.

[2] The question of appeal to the Privy Council does not seem to have been most strongly contested; the battle raged round the personal jurisdiction of the bishop, as against the lay judge in the Provincial Court, with the result that the bishop is empowered to hear the case, sitting with three assessors, or to send the case to the Provincial Court *if he himself prefer it* (sec. 13). This Act, the Church Discipline Act, 3 & 4 Vict. c. 86, 1840, was the first which gave to the bishops the veto on prosecutions against the clergy. Sec. 16 constitutes all archbishops and bishops sworn of the Privy Council members of the Judicial Committee for the hearing of these appeals, and at least one must be present at any hearing.

Similarly in 1874[1] the Public Worship Regulation Act, which was introduced into the Lords by the Archbishop after communication with Convocation, and with the general approval of the bishops,[2] contains an express stipulation that the final appeal shall be to the Privy Council (sec. 9).

Meanwhile a change had taken place in the position of the bishops as members of the Privy Council. As a result of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1878, and the rules subsequently made to carry out its provisions, the bishops ceased to be full members of the Judicial Committee;[3] but four of their number, amongst whom must always be one of the archbishops or the Bishop of London, sit as assessors in ecclesiastical cases.[4]

Such is the final court of appeal of our Church as at present constituted. Curiously enough, many to whom the Privy Council is anathema have nothing to say against the Court of Delegates: yet the change from one to the other was largely the work of the leaders of the Church; and though the Privy Council differs, doubtless, in some details from the Court of Delegates as constituted under the Reformation Settlement and in use during three centuries, in theory it is identical. "There cannot possibly be any difference in principle between an appeal to the king in Chancery, given by statute in A.D. 1533, and an appeal to the king in Council, given by statute in A.D. 1832: the latter may, or may not, be a better court than the former; but there cannot be any difference in principle."[5]

[1] 37 and 38 Vict. c. 85.

[2] See Hansard, vol. ccxix. p. 43.

[3] See 'Annual Practice,' 1899, vol. ii. p. 481.

[4] This curious change was largely due to the High Church party.

[5] Selborne, Defence, p. 43.

III. *Legislation.*

It is an axiom of English lawyers that Parliament is supreme. Legally, it can do "anything but make a man a woman or a woman a man"; morally, an Act of Parliament may be iniquitous but it cannot be illegal — the courts cannot refuse to enforce it. Any claim to legislative action on the part of the Church must recognise this fact. Acts of Parliament may and often have overridden the wishes of Convocation: a canon of Convocation can never be enforced in face of a statute. But the same is true of voluntary associations, of railway companies, clubs, religious denominations apart from the Established Church; yet each claims and exercises within limits wide powers of legislation for its members, whether by byelaws, rules, or constitutions. The mere fact of Establishment cannot rob the Church of all volition, and put her in an inferior position to the Great Eastern Railway or the Reform Club. The Articles, with full parliamentary sanction, distinctly claim the Church's right to legislate for her members: "Every particular or National Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church" (Art. xxxiv.) The Church must be in a position to express its will apart from Parliament, though within the limits laid down by that body:[1] to deny this right is to make belief a matter of statute—in effect to deny freedom of conscience to the Established Church. The machinery for expressing this legislative volition may

[1] See Introd. to Articles.

at present be defective; the theoretic right to legislate is not thereby given up.

But the limits within which, and the means by which, the Church can at present express her mind are, as a result of the Reformation Settlement, very straitly drawn.

In May 1532 Henry sent an ultimatum to Convocation, already cowed by the browbeating in 1530,[1] and Convocation passed resolutions submitting to the king's demands. This submission was embodied in an Act of Parliament the following year. Not only was (1) the king's writ of summons to assemble, and (2) his licence to act, declared necessary, but in addition (3) he was secured the further right of veto, and no canons were to be put in force without his consent, on penalty of fine and imprisonment.[2] With regard to the existing mass of canon law, the king was authorised to appoint thirty-two commissioners, sixteen clerical and sixteen lay, who were to have power to "vyewe, serche, and examyne" the canons and constitutions provincial and synodal. Only such as the Commissioners approved should be henceforth enforced, and even to them the king's assent under the Great Seal was necessary.[3]

[1] When an information was filed against all the clergy of England in the King's Bench for having accepted Wolsey as legate, and they were fined £118,000.

[2] Act for the Submission of the Clergy, 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19.

[3] The power to appoint this Commission was renewed by 27 Hen. VIII. c. 15 for three years, and again by 35 Hen. VIII. c. 16 for the king's life. The Commission, in fact, never sat, and the power to appoint a commission lapsed on Henry's death. The last Act contained a clause similar to sec. viii. of the 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19—viz., that existing canons, not repugnant to the laws of the realm or the royal prerogative, should be "exercised and put in ure for the time." The judge of the Arches Court has held

A temporary provision, however, in clause 7 enacted that existing canons and constitutions should still be used and executed, till the Commissioners should report, provided they were not "Contraryaunt nor repugnant to the lawes statutes and customes of this Realme nor to the damage or hurte of the Kynges prerogatyve Royall." The Commission never did in fact report, and it is on this proviso that the authority of the ancient canon law in the courts to-day rests. Nothing can be more unsatisfactory: it is left to each individual judge, as cases arise, to ascertain how far the Sext, or the Extravagantes of John xxii., clash with the law of the land or the king's prerogative.[1]

Present methods.

The legislative machinery[2] of the English Church to-day consists of the Convocations of York and Canterbury, each Convocation possessing two Houses. The Upper House in either case is presided over by the Archbishop, and consists exclusively of bishops—twenty-one in Canterbury and

that the last Act extended the scope of the first, by including the ecclesiastical common law as well as the canons, and that the continuation clause was permanent in the second case, though not in the first (Liddell *v.* Westerton (1856), ed. Moore, p. 90).

[1] Professor Maitland has pointed out (Canon Law, p. 81) that prior to the Reformation the distinction between the canon law adopted in England, or king's ecclesiastical law, and foreign canon law was unknown. The distinction appears after the Reformation (see Cawdry's case, 156, 1a, 33 Eliz., where it is elaborated at length). The general canon law has been relied on as an authority in the courts since the Reformation. Lay baptism has been upheld on the authority of the common law prevailing for 1400 years over Christian Europe. (Escott *v.* Mastin, 4 Moore, P. C., p. 104, 1842.) Still more remarkable, Fountains Abbey was declared discharged from tithes because, by the Council of the Lateran, the Cistercian order, to which the Abbey then belonged, was relieved from their payment (Staveley *v.* Ullithorn, 1 Hardres, p. 101, 1657).

[2] See Anson, vol. ii. p. 408.

nine in York; the lower Houses comprise the deans from each cathedral chapter, together with one proctor or representative of the other clergy in the chapter. The parochial clergy, as distinct from the cathedral chapter, are represented by the archdeacons in their "proper persons," and by two proctors,—giving in all 161 members for Canterbury and 84 for York. Houses of Laymen have been set up in both Provinces, in accordance with resolutions of Convocation. They are not recognised by the Constitution, and they are at present, unfortunately, not unlike the famous definition of Convocation itself, "Nouns of multitude, signifying many, but not signifying much." They have no legally recognised position, and their resolutions are of no binding force on the Church. Members are chosen by lay members of the Diocesan Conferences, and number in the Northern Province 111, and in the Southern 109.

The Canterbury Convocation has resolved that nothing in the scheme for the House of Laymen "shall be held to impair the right of this sacred Synod to pronounce finally for the Province on all questions of faith and doctrine."[1]

Veto of the Crown.

Convocation did not meet from 1717 to 1850, but it now meets regularly[2] with the meeting of Parliament. It was an inherent prerogative of the Crown to convene, prorogue,

[1] It need, perhaps, hardly be added that no large powers of legislation for the Church as a whole can ever be granted to Convocation unless there is real and effective lay representation, with a right as in the Irish Church for laymen to vote on all questions.

[2] Lathbury (History of Convocation, 1843, p. 481) and Cripps (Law of Church and Clergy, 4th ed.) gravely argue whether Convocation should be called again, and the latter strongly urged that there would be nothing for Convocation to do.

and dissolve Convocation.[1] The Act[2] embodying the submission of the clergy, already quoted, confirms this royal prerogative of summons, and further makes actual royal assent necessary to the validity of every new canon. The procedure for summoning Convocation is shortly as follows, and it will be noticed that the Crown intervenes at every step: First of all, in order to summon Convocation at all, an order by the Queen in Council is necessary for the issue of writs to the archbishops of the two Provinces; the latter then pass on mandates to the individual bishops requiring the attendance of the proper representatives, already enumerated. Convocation meets, but it can still do nothing but pass pious resolutions, unless the Crown, on its own initiative, or stimulated by Convocation itself, will communicate *Letters of Business*, which contain an expression of willingness on the part of the Crown that Convocation should discuss the matter described in the letters. These letters are, however, not sufficient by themselves: they are accompanied by a licence[3] in the form of letters patent, expressly giving power to make or alter the canon. Nor even now can Convocation proceed in freedom to act and promulgate its enactment: the Crown has a final veto, and a further

[1] Blackstone, vol. i. p. 290; Coke, iv. Inst., pp. 322, 323, gives instances to show "that the Clergie was never assembled or called together at a Convocation but by the King's Writ: and further, the King did often appoint Commissioners by writ to sit with them at the Convocation."

[2] 25 Henry VIII. c. 19.

[3] This licence recites (1) the Act for the Submission of the Clergy; (2) permission for the proposed canon; (3) provision that the canon shall not be contrary to the law of the Church; (4) provision that the new canon shall not be valid till finally allowed and confirmed by letters patent. See Anson, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

licence is necessary before the new canon can be "promulged." So that with the Crown, or rather the Ministers of the Crown, rests the decision whether Convocation shall be summoned at all, whether, and if so on what subject, it shall be permitted to take legislative action, and, finally, to veto such proposed legislation if desirable.[1]

In 1861, and again in 1865, Convocation, after the necessary letters of business and preliminary licence had been duly granted, came to a decision to alter the 29th Canon: licence to promulge was refused, and the whole proceeding consequently was abortive.[2]

Effect of Canons when passed.

Canons which have duly passed Convocation, and received the royal assent, and do not clash with any Act of Parliament, are not in themselves Acts of a sovereign legislature; they do not bind the whole nation even in ecclesiastical matters, nor yet all professed Churchmen, but only the clergy. This is the received opinion based on the conclusions of Lord Hardwicke and Mr Justice Blackstone,[3] and is without doubt now the law of the land. A different rule had held good before the Reformation.[4] Lyndwood

[1] Anson says: "The existing practice seems to afford a useful check on hasty or ill-considered ecclesiastical law-making. The laity might be seriously affected by such legislation, and they have no voice in the matter, except through the control exercised by the Queen's Ministers," p. 412.

[2] Chronicle of Convocation, 1872, p. 710.

[3] See Middleton *v.* Crofts (1736), 2 Atk., p. 650; Blackstone Commentaries, Introd., sec. iv. p. 83. Lord Hardwicke's words are: "We are all of opinion that the canons of 1603, not having been confirmed by Parliament, do not *proprio vigore* bind the laity: I say *proprio vigore*, for there are many provisions contained in these canons which are declaratory of the ancient usage and law of the Church of England, received and allowed here, which in that respect, and by virtue of such ancient allowance, will bind the laity."—P. 653.

[4] See Middleton *v.* Crofts (1736), 2 Atk., at p. 666.

felt no constitutional scruples on the ground that the laity were not represented in Convocation. But the seventeenth century settled on a sure basis the undoubtedly sound constitutional principle that legislation and representation go together, and that the clergy do not as such represent the laity. Instances of such Acts of Convocation, self-denying ordinances passed by the clergy to bind themselves, occur in the well-known canons of 1603 and 1640: they are enforceable by spiritual censures, admonition, suspension, &c., in the ecclesiastical courts, always provided that they do not run counter to an Act of Parliament.

Canons enforced by Act of Parliament.

At times of religious crisis Convocation has often been seen acting in line with Parliament, with the result that canons and resolutions of Convocation are found confirmed by or confirming Acts of the Temporal Legislature. Our present Prayer-Book received the approval of the Convocations in December 1661, and was enforced by parliamentary authority in its Act of Uniformity the next year. The shortened form of service authorised by the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act of 1872 had been duly approved previously by both the Convocations. Such Acts of Parliament of course bind both clergy and laity like any other statutes. Not only were the clergy who used any other Prayer-Book punishable by deprivation,[1] but laymen speaking in derogation of the Book of Common Prayer were liable to criminal prosecution before the justices of assize.[1] But this penalty is due to parliamentary sanction, just as the Prayer-Book was the work of Convocation.

[1] 14 Car. II. c. 4, and 1 Eliz. c. 2, ss. 9 and 17. See for a case of this, Fleming's case, 1 Leonard, 295, 26 and 27 Eliz.

IV. *Executive Control.*

The circle of power was not yet complete: the titular position of the Crown, the judiciary, legislation, and the canon law were all under royal control; the power of selecting the chief executive officers of the Church was not yet secured. In 1534,[1] accordingly, an Act was passed that on every avoidance of archbishopric or bishopric the king might grant to the dean and chapter a licence under the Great Seal, "with a letter myssyve conteynyng the name of the persone which they shall elect." There was to be very little free choice in the matter, for if they did not do as they were told and elect the king's man within twelve days, then the king might nominate the bishop by letters patent, without any further formality; and any bishop refusing to consecrate the king's nominee incurred the penalties of a premunire.

The election, or rather selection, of bishops by the Crown on the advice of the Prime Minister, goes on to-day in accordance with the Act of 1534. The Crown also appoints to all the deaneries in England and Wales,[2] save St Asaph,

[1] Second Annates Act, 25 Hen. VIII. c. 20. Wakeman, 'History of Church of England' (p. 221), minimises the effect of this statute by saying, "It was merely returning to the practice which obtained before the Norman conquest." That is quite incorrect: there was a real election by the clergy in most cases before the Conquest (see Stubbs, vol. i. pp. 134, 135), but even if Wakeman's statement were correct, it is not in point. The only question for us is, Did the Act, in fact, give the king control? There can be no doubt it did.

[2] 3 & 4 Vict. c. 113, s. 24; and also three canons of St Paul's (6 & 7 Vict. c. 77). Deans of the old foundation used to come in like bishops by *congé d'élire* with royal assent; deans of the new foundation were always appointed by royal letters patent (Phillimore, p. 127).

Bangor, St David's, and Llandaff;[1] to many canonries; some miscellaneous posts, such as Mastership of the Temple and Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford; to about 170 livings exclusively, and to some 230 alternately with other persons.[1]

V. *Church Property.*

This is an important part of the Church as at present established, but for our immediate purpose can be quickly disposed of, for the right of the Church to her own is not now in dispute. There is no necessary connection between Establishment and Endowment: a Church might be recognised by the State which possessed no, or next to no, Endowment; Disestablishment need not, though it probably would, mean, as in the case of Ireland, the diversion of much Church property to secular purposes. But the enemies of the Establishment to-day are those who call themselves most loudly the friends of the Church: they assume, probably too readily, that Disestablishment would entail no confiscation of ecclesiastical funds.[2]

[1] Clergy List, 1899, p. 438.

[2] The funds of the Church are derived chiefly from the following sources: Queen Anne's bounty—*i.e.*, first-fruits and tenths, originally payable to the Pope in support of crusades, confiscated by Henry VIII., and restored by Queen Anne; tithe, and Church property administered by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The income from these sources is roughly somewhat over five millions: see Selborne, *op. cit.* Parliament has very occasionally made direct grants to the Church—*e.g.*, the million voted in 1818 to build new churches as a thank-offering for England's deliverance in the great war; sums have been similarly voted for the direct endowment of Nonconformity —*e.g.*, the *regium donum*, paid from 1722 to 1852, and amounting in all to about £200,000: Selborne, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

§ 4. Dissenters: Position of in England.

In England Dissenting or Nonconformist bodies are, in the eye of the law, voluntary associations, like a club or a company. Voluntary, not only in the sense that members can join or leave them at pleasure, but also in the sense that their tenets are entirely a matter for the individual members to settle. They are of course subject in the end, like all associations, to parliamentary control. Parliament might wind up a voluntary religious body, or indeed, as Parliament has once tried to do in England, forbid such bodies altogether. But, as distinct from the Established Church, the position of a Presbyterian or Methodist Church is one of independence; questions of admission, of belief, of expulsion, all rest with the members alone, not on parliamentary sanctions,[1] enforceable in the courts of the land. This is the general principle, but every such voluntary religious society is certain to formulate its doctrines, to require rules of ritual and procedure. Times of trouble will come, various interpretations will be put on the rules, and back we must come to the secular courts again to interpret them.

The secular courts protect rights to property, and property rights will and must be involved. Chapels are built, endowments left, lectureships founded, to maintain a certain type of doctrine; years will pass, and times change, a

[1] A Dissenting body may, if it likes, embody its tenets in an Act of Parliament, when another Act will be required to secure any alteration. See Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Society Act (34 & 35 Vict. c. 40), where a detailed definition of the doctrines of the Society is set out in a schedule.

younger generation would emphasise some doctrines and dispense with others, the older members resist the innovation, and an action in Chancery becomes inevitable, and while directly deciding questions of property the courts will be compelled to pronounce on matters of doctrine and faith. In a case debated for more than ten years in the courts during the early part of this century, the point involved was whether the doctrine of the Trinity was an essential part of the Presbyterian creed, and her Majesty's judges had to critically examine and pronounce on the first fourteen verses of the first chapter of the Hebrews, and the effect of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.[1]

§ 5. Conclusion on the English Establishment.

I have stated tersely what the facts of the Establishment are. Seldom is the confusion between the actual and the ideal as great as in the present controversy: whether the Crown ought morally to exercise supreme control over the Church is a matter of argument; whether, in fact, the

[1] The difficulty arose from the fact that at the end of the sixteenth century, when considerable endowments were left to the Presbyterian communities in England and Ireland, the doctrine of the Trinity was an essential part of their creed: by the end of the eighteenth century, however, many of these communities had become Unitarians, and the question was, whether under the original trust-deeds the endowments could be retained: the House of Lords decided they could not, the new tenets not being in accordance with the trusts. It is significant that the Legislature had to step in, and by 7 & 8 Vict. c. 45 (the Dissenters Chapels Act) forbid any congregation being turned out on the ground of new doctrines or breach of trust, provided it could show that these doctrines had been taught for twenty-five years.—Att. Gen. *v.* Shore, Shore *v.* Wilson, 9 Cl. and F., p. 356, 1842.

Crown legally has that power, is not. The Crown has been entrusted with this authority mainly by Acts of Parliament, to which the Church, at one time speaking through her Convocations, at another time by her bishops, at all times by the tacit acquiescence of her members for generations, has consented. The Crown acts as trustee for all parties, and especially for the laity when not otherwise directly represented. In legislation the Church has the right to express her will, so far as she can, in Convocation; the Crown, on behalf of the silent layman, to direct and veto.

The Crown constitutes the supreme court of appeal of the Church,[1] the method of selecting the members of that court having been settled by Parliament with the approval of the representatives of the Church: the Crown again, on behalf of the whole body, appoints the chief executive officers.

But the Queen is a constitutional monarch, not a despot. No one claims that her Majesty has the right in virtue of the

[1] The decisions of the Privy Council do not properly make ecclesiastical law. In the well-known words of the Gorham judgment, the Privy Council, "constituted for the purpose of advising her Majesty in matters which come within its competency, has no jurisdiction or authority to settle matters of faith, or to determine what ought, in any particular, to be the doctrine of the Church of England. Its duty extends only to the consideration of that which is by law established to be the doctrine of the Church of England, upon the true and legal construction of her Articles and Formularies." Owing to the confused state of the existing canon and ecclesiastical law, the decisions of the Privy Council have more legislative effect than those of an ordinary court. It is curious to note that the *appel comme d'abus*, or right of the civil power in Roman Catholic countries to check abuses of proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts,—a legal conception in great favour with the High Church party,—is bitterly criticised abroad for the same reasons as the Privy Council is in England: the *appel comme d'abus* must in the end result in a trial by the civil courts of the merits of the case. (See Moulart, *op. cit.*, p. 655.)

royal supremacy to perform divine service in Westminster Abbey or to consecrate the Archbishop of Canterbury. Article xxxvii. claims no more and no less: "Where we attribute to the Queen's majesty the chief government, we give not to our princes the ministering either of God's Word or of the Sacraments; but that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal." But no one, unless endowed with the most ostrich-like qualities, can refuse to see that these trustee powers of the Crown do constitute a very definite headship over the Church.[1]

We are frequently told that this is a fallacy: that if this were so, Disestablishment, and the consequent removal of the head, must involve decapitation, and presumably death for the body. The argument is singularly inconclusive: the death of a father does not destroy his family: trusts survive the removal of a trustee.[2] The English Establishment is possibly not logical, it certainly is not perfect, but arrangements which are denounced as illogical not infrequently prove to be workable: and we can freely admit that improvements are possible which need not destroy the Establishment or endanger the Church. In legislation the Crown might properly relax its hold and

[1] Neither the fact that the Crown acts no longer personally, but through Ministers—*i.e.*, a committee of the party with a majority in the House of Commons; nor the fact that Parliament now represents Ireland and Scotland as well as England, and its members are no longer all members of the English Church, constitute any legal change: in law, Parliament and the Crown to-day inherit the powers of the Reformation period; but these changes do make the problem vastly more complicated than it was 300 years ago, and sharpen the Church's claim for greater autonomy.

[2] See Canon Scott Holland, letter to 'Daily Chronicle,' May 18, 1899.

resign many of its powers to Convocation, provided that body were, as in Ireland or is the case of the Scotch Assembly,[1] properly constituted, with sufficient lay representatives competent to vote on all matters, doctrinal, ritual, and others. It is not unreasonable that the final Church court of appeal should consist of Churchmen, their method of selection possibly determined, as in Scotland or Ireland, by the Church herself: it is unreasonable, nay more, impossible, that the preponderant voice in the final court of appeal for the decision of questions of law should proceed from any but lawyers and laymen; the pre-Reformation Church courts, presided over by ecclesiastics, provided as hideous a parody of justice as a modern French court-martial.[2]

[1] See below, §§ 6, 7. In the Irish Church the laity have a veto, and also in the American Church. See 'Essays on Church Reform,' by Canon Gore, p. 322.

[2] A good illustration of the difficulty experienced even to-day by the ecclesiastical mind in comprehending the legal method was afforded by the recent Lambeth "hearing," when the leading counsel for the English Church Union, being unable to restrain the flow of irrelevancies of clerical experts, threw up his brief. How important this question of a lay or ecclesiastical complexion for the final court of appeal is felt to be was shown by the deadlock on the point at the joint meeting of the Convocations last June. The party in the Church which loudly demands a "spiritual" court do not seem at all clear what constitutes a "spiritual" court. Must an ecclesiastic —*e.g.*, a bishop—sit in person as judge? or is it sufficient if the judge be appointed by ecclesiastics, and not by the Crown? See Q. 1103 of Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, cited by Tomlinson. I have only touched on the question as one of expediency; but Mr Gladstone, Canon MacColl, and other advocates of a spiritual court, press the point as one of principle: this, if analysed, amounts to a claim of infallibility for decisions of spiritual courts. For the scandalous state of the pre-Reformation Courts, see Stubbs, Constitutional History, vol. iii. p. 523.

§ 6. The Church in Scotland.

Much has been heard during the recent controversy of the Church in Scotland, and the freedom of its position as compared to the Church in England.

For our purpose it is necessary to distinguish carefully the Episcopal Church, the Free Presbyterian Church, and the Established Presbyterian Church: it is with the last we are mainly concerned. The creed and the organisation of this Church merit separate treatment, but it is with the latter alone that we have time to deal.[1]

The present organisation comprises four main bodies, viz.: (1) The kirk-session, or vestry, consisting of the minister and two or more elders; (2) the Presbytery, *i.e.*, all ministers within the given area and Professors of Divinity, together with one elder elected by each kirk-session.[2] There were in 1886[3] 1315 parishes and 84

[1] The creed of the Scotch Church, embodied in the Confession of Faith, was presented by Knox to the Scotch Parliament on August 17, 1560, and by the Parliament solemnly voted on and accepted as the truth. The Church was not formally constituted till seven years later: "The civil power thus actually sanctioned the creed of the Church seven years before it recognised the Church itself" (Taylor Innes, Law of Creeds in Scotland, 1867, p. 13). The early Confession gave way to a Confession drawn up at Westminster in 1647, ratified by the Estates in 1690. Prelacy was abolished, and three years later adhesion to the Westminster Confession was required of every minister. Finally, the Presbyterian Settlement was reaffirmed by the Act of Union in 1706, article xxv. of which declares that it should remain "a fundamental and essential condition of the Union"—5 & 6 Anne, c. 8, Article xxv., secs. ii. and v. This Act ratifies the Scotch Act of 1592, which founded the Church Courts.

[2] The Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, p. 599. Anson's account here is not quite accurate, p. 423.

[3] Encyclopædia Britannica, art. Church of Scotland.

Presbyteries. (3) Above the Presbytery comes the provincial Synod, consisting of members of all the Presbyteries; while (4) the final authority is the General Assembly, which is the supreme legislative and judicial body. If the elections are fully made, the Assembly consists of 704 members, comprising 371 ministers and 333 elders, — an arrangement which secures, as the English Church at present does not, a due amount of direct representation to laymen in the Church.[1]

As to the work of the Church—

1. *The executive* work is mainly done by the Presbyteries, to whose jurisdiction each minister at his ordination promises to submit. Its functions are very much those of our episcopate: it examines candidates for the ministry, confers licences to preach, and ordains ministers. Since the abolition of private patronage in 1874[2] the appointment of ministers rests with the congregation of the vacant church. When selected, the minister must be presented to the Presbytery, as in England to the Bishop, for approval and induction; and if the congregation do not act within six months, the appointment lapses to the Presbytery.

The kirk-session is not, however, by any means without importance: it admits to membership of the Church, and performs the important function of electing elders, laymen who subscribe adhesion to a Confession of Faith

[1] Green, Encyclopædia of Scots Law (1896), art. Church Courts. Encyclopædia Britannica, art. Church of Scotland. Ecclesiastical Courts Commission 1883, p. 599.

[2] 37 & 38 Vict. c. 82, sec. 3. Compensation was of course paid to the private patrons.

together with the Presbyterian form of government,[1] but who remain laymen; the number of elders in a kirk-session must not fall below two.[2]

2. *Legislation.*—Here the Crown does make its influence felt, though its hold is far less tenacious than in England. The General Assembly sits annually, for a period of about ten days, towards the end of May, and the Crown is represented by a Lord High Commissioner: he does not, however, preside, that duty being reserved for an elected moderator. The High Commissioner is but a *roi fainéant*, he has no power. At no stage has the Crown any effective control. Legislation is initiated either by the Assembly itself, or by Synods or Presbyteries, but in either case without any Royal licence.[3] When passed into law, that law at once becomes effective without a royal permit. The General Assembly has plenary powers to pass what laws it will for the good of the Church, provided it does not attempt to override an Act of Parliament.

3. *Judiciary.*—Here again the General Assembly is the Supreme Court of Appeal: the kirk-session and the presbytery can both hear and determine cases of breach of morality, or of the laws of the Church; an appeal lies to the Synod, and thence[4] to the General Assembly in every case. It will thus be seen that the pressure of Establishment is very unequal in the two countries: in Scotland, administration

[1] Embodied in the formula approved by Act of the General Assembly 1889, xxii.

[2] See Green, Encyclopædia, *loc. cit.*

[3] Legislation is initiated by *overtures.* By the Barrier Act 1697, an overture, though passed by the General Assembly, must be referred to the presbyteries, and adopted by a majority of them before it can become law.

[4] Appeals do not lie direct to the General Assembly from the Presbytery.

of Church doctrine and discipline is in the hands of the Church herself, meaning thereby lay and clerical members alike; she selects her own executive officers; she legislates for herself by means of her own chosen delegates, without let or hindrance from the Crown: by means of the same delegates she tries, censures, and punishes her members for breaches of her laws. The Church courts are possessed of statutory jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical, which is quite independent of the civil courts of the realm: if a minister is deposed by his Presbytery for immoral conduct, and appeal to the civil Court of Session, that Court will decline to interfere.[1]

At the same time, the civil power imposes very definite limitations. The Church's freedom to act is not entirely unfettered. She could not pass an Act which should bind in the face of an Act of Parliament. She could not alter the form of Church government to episcopacy, nor modify her doctrines as contained in the Confession of Faith, nor reintroduce private patronage, for all these features of her

[1] See *Lockhart* v. *Presbytery of Deer*, 5th July 1851, 13 D, 1296. "Although we may form a different opinion in regard to a matter of form or even of substantial justice, in my opinion we cannot interfere to quash the sentence. We have just as little right to interfere with the procedure of the Church courts in matters of ecclesiastical discipline as we have to interfere with the proceedings of the Court of Justiciary in a criminal question." A flagrant transgression of the form of worship ratified by the Act of Union would of course justify the interference of the civil court, as being a violation of the Act of Parliament. See Report of Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, p. 60. The Free Church has courts of her own also, but these courts have no jurisdiction properly so called, and the secular courts will enquire into their decisions even on such questions as deprivation of a minister. See *M'Millan* v. *Free Church*, the Cardross Case, Scotch Session Cases, 2nd series, vol. xxiii. p. 1314, July 19, 1861. See also *Long* v. *Bishop of Capetown* as to the authority of voluntary ecclesiastical tribunals generally.

system are embodied in Acts of Parliament, only to be modified by the same authority. In 1834, in the course of a prolonged struggle, the General Assembly claimed to exercise an arbitrary right of rejecting ministers—in other words, to override the Act of Parliament under which private patronage was then perfectly lawful. The civil court[1] interfered to protect the rights of the private patron, the General Assembly had to give way, and the large secession which now constitutes the Free Kirk was the result.

§ 7. The Church in Ireland.

The history of the Irish Church affords a useful object-lesson in the methods and results of disestablishment. Up to the middle of this century the Irish Church was united with the English, it bore the same relation to the State, to Parliament, and the Crown as that with which we are familiar.[2] Mr Gladstone's measure in 1869 rent the State connection and destroyed the establishment in Ireland. The Act formally declares the union of the Irish and English Churches at an end as from 1st of January 1871, and then proceeds, section by section, to snap the links which bound the civil and the ecclesiastical together.[3] In legislation the veto of the Crown is abolished, and full

[1] In the famous Auchterarder case, 6 Cl. & E., 646.

[2] The 5th article of Act of Union, 39 & 40 Geo. III. c. 67 (1800), ran: "That the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church."

[3] 32 & 33 Vict. c. 42 (1869), sec. 2. The same precedent was, generally speaking, adopted by the abortive Welsh Disestablishment Bill.

power is restored to make "rules for the wellbeing and ordering of the Church." In matters of judicature the ecclesiastical courts are swept away, and ecclesiastical law ceases to "exist as law." The Crown surrenders its executive power of appointing to bishoprics and deaneries,[1] and the bishop in turn can no longer claim the right to advise the Crown in Parliament. But the destruction of the establishment by no means spells the death of the Church: the connecting ties are severed, the ecclesiastical entity remains; the State guardianship is withdrawn, henceforth the Church must walk alone. The Church may summon her own Convocations to be elected as the "bishops, clergy, and *laity*, should appoint," and may legislate without let or hindrance from any but her own adherents.[2] The existing rules of ecclesiastical law, of ritual, of doctrine are not swept away—they are to continue in force till the Church shall desire to alter them; but they are to bind the members of this voluntary society not as a matter of law but of contract, conditions to which they submit of free will and not of necessity. The Church may delegate to whom she pleases the right to examine the conduct of her members,—may set up, that is, voluntary courts of her own, but these will have no jurisdiction from

[1] Private patronage was at the same time swept away, provision being made for compensation.

[2] Vested rights were to be protected, and no existing holder of ecclesiastical preferment was to be turned out during his life for refusing to subscribe to any changes Convocation might make (sec. 20). Apart from this, the power of the Irish Church to legislate appears to be now unlimited. See Anson, *op. cit.*, p. 426, General Convention, ch. i. sec. 26.

the State: if questions of property are involved, the civil courts will always claim to interfere.[1]

No time was lost in taking up the new burden, and the most instructive thing to notice is the way in which the laity at once come to the front and take their proper place, as Parliament has broadly hinted they should. The ancient Clerical Synods of Armagh and Dublin met in September 1869,[2] and agreed to a new constitution of Convocation in which the laity should take full part, an amendment reserving questions of doctrine and discipline for the clergy alone being rejected. An important lay conference followed in October, composed of 417 members of commanding position and ability in the Church: its resolutions were accepted by the archbishops, and settled the constitutional basis of the great National Convention summoned in 1870; the keynote of that settlement was the proportion of lay representatives to clerical—viz., two to one.

The constitution of Convocation and of other Church machinery as settled by the Convention of 1870 was, in outline, as follows: Commencing with the parish unit, all who subscribed to a declaration of Church membership were to be placed on the roll of Vestrymen, they

[1] With regard to Church endowments and property generally, the provisions were somewhat complicated: roughly, the Church kept all the cathedrals and churches and property therein; recent endowments, since 1660, and life interests of incumbents in the rest; on their death the capital in the latter lapsed to the State. See Salmon, 'Contemporary Review,' 1886, vol. i. p. 303.

[2] Already in April a most important joint conference of clergy and laity, in equal proportions, from all parts of Ireland, had met to protest against the Disestablishment Bill. See 'Essays on Church Reform,' edited by Canon Gore, p. 356.

in turn choosing a Select Vestry or Council of twelve, who, with the vicar and churchwardens, should manage the affairs of the parish; each Diocese was to act through a Synod composed of the Bishop, all beneficed and licensed clergy in the Diocese, and two lay Synodsmen from each parish.[1]

The General Synod consisted of the three orders: 12 bishops, 208 clergymen, and 416 laymen, the double representation of the laity thus being preserved throughout. The General Synod has full powers of legislation in all Church matters, but on the requisition of ten members the vote can be taken by orders, and if either the clergy or laity, voting by orders, refuse to sanction a proposal, it must drop, each order thus having a veto on any change: the bishops can also vote apart if they wish, and two-thirds of the bishops can veto a measure even though carried by two-thirds of the other two orders.[2]

In the matter of tribunals, courts of two grades were set up: a Diocesan court in each Diocese, in which the Bishop presided, assisted by his chancellor, and a clergyman and layman chosen by the Synod; and a court of the General Synod, or a court of appeal. The latter was to consist of one archbishop, one bishop, and three laymen who had held judicial office, the last being chosen by lot for each particular hearing, from a *rota* made up by the Synod.[3] Thus the casting vote, in disputed cases of doctrine or ritual, was to rest with a layman and a lawyer.

With regard to executive matters, the bishops are chosen

[1] These were required to make a declaration that they were communicants as well as members. General Convention Stats., ch. i. sec. 38.

[2] General Convention Stats., ch. i. sec. 22.

[3] Ibid., ch. iv. sec. 19.

by the Synod of the vacant Diocese, provided there is such unanimity of choice as to secure a two-thirds majority of clergy and laity.[1] Livings are filled by a Diocesan patronage board, consisting of the bishop and a lay and two clerical members chosen by the Synod. On a vacancy occurring, this board acts jointly with three lay nominators appointed by the vestry of the vacant benefice.

The Church had not long to wait before these new powers of self-government and cohesion were put to a severe test. So early as 1870 a stormy agitation commenced for the revision of the Prayer-Book; the storm lasted for seven years, and in the end some alterations were agreed to: the Athanasian Creed was made optional, and a strict ritual law was substituted for the hydra heads of the ornament rubric. However these changes are viewed, there is no doubt that the Church emerged all the stronger from the struggle. The debates were conducted in a parliamentary, and not in an ecclesiastical, spirit; if there was little technical theology, there was plenty of common-sense. "Great though the defects of the discussions were, it is generally agreed that they have led to a wonderful diffusion of information and softening of party spirit."[2] Those who have the best interests of the English Church at heart cannot but hope for similar results from concession of greater autonomy to a truly representative convocation of our Church.

[1] Otherwise the bishops make a selection from the names which receive the most votes.

[2] Gore, Essays, p. 364. For results of disestablishment generally, see Salmon, cited above; speech of Primate at Templepatrick, autumn of 1898. Ball, 'History of Church of Ireland.'

§ 8. Some Results of Disestablishment.

The history of the Irish Church renders vividly clear the legal consequences of disestablishment, but it is alike more important and more difficult to gauge the moral, social, and religious results. It must be admitted that Irish experience has not justified the prophecies of the most despondent. If there has been a loss of dignity, a curtailing of organisation, a confiscation of property, there has been a gain in corporate life and *esprit de corps*, a softening of party rancour, much voluntary munificence.

Our Church may look forward confidently to reaping a rich harvest of like results, so soon as the State shall grant her legitimate demand for greater autonomy, and that without being called on to suffer the staggering blow of disestablishment. A blow it must be, nor is it by any means the Church alone which would suffer under it: apart altogether from the evils which must result from the violent uprooting of so ancient and integral a portion of the national life, no thoughtful Churchman can contemplate calmly the complete secularisation of the State. "If a nation have unity of will, have pervading sympathies, have capability of reward and suffering contingent upon its acts, shall we deny its responsibility, its need of a religion to meet that responsibility?"[1] There is no alternative proposed: it is either the State recognition of the present Church, "primitive, Catholic, Protestant, and reformed," or of none at all. Disestablish-

[1] Gladstone, Church and State, quoted by Macaulay.

ment must mean the complete and permanent severance of the civil and the religious, a confession of official atheism on the part of the State: in the words of one of the Church's leaders, the Church should even be prepared to hand over all she possesses to any other Christian body, if by that sacrifice she can prevent an entire breach between State life and religious influence.

That the Church herself must suffer there can be no doubt: materially, though her cathedrals, churches, and recent endowments would probably be left inviolate, much property would certainly be taken, her activities hampered, and the present completeness of parochial organisation, especially in country districts, destroyed. Further, in the sphere of her higher life a State connection serves to secure a steadiness, a breadth of view, a continuity which self-government may easily miss. In the present heated state of controversy, disestablishment might well result in a schism, two Churches instead of one, and the unedifying spectacle of a scramble between them for the cathedrals and other "loaves and fishes."[1] The experience of Privy Council decisions during the last fifty years proves the effectiveness of State influence as exerted on the side of inclusiveness, of moderation, of protection for unpopular minorities. Those who have the best interests of the Church at heart may well require cogent proof before they surrender the patent advantages of this practical, restraining, unecclesiastical influence.

[1] The experience of the Irish Church cannot be entirely relied on: that Church was much more homogeneous to start with than is ours.

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

By the Right Hon. Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Bart.

"Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris."

Character of Evangelical Movement.

THE object of this essay will be to show that the Evangelical Movement in the Church of England, beginning in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, has continued throughout the nineteenth, and is still continuing; that it has advanced from time to time by fresh impulses, and is yet advancing; that it has exercised, and still exercises, a vital influence on the efforts of English people in the direction of charity, benevolence, self-devotion, evangelisation, temperance, education of the poorest, freedom of the slaves, prison reform,—in short, everything that can promote the glory of God and goodwill towards man; that this vitality is unabated, animating the national life with indomitable energy, incessant perseverance, ceaseless vigilance, and as yet resistless organisation; that its sphere has been not only in England but in the almost world-wide British

empire, and has extended to countries not British both in Asia and in Africa; that its leaders have been, and are, worthy of the Church of England and of Christendom at large.

This task will be attempted without the least desire of disparaging, but with full acknowledgment of, the good work done by other movements within the Church of England at home or abroad. Suffice it here to confine attention to the Evangelical Movement in the Church, which is to-day, as it has long been, a leading force in our national progress, and a potent factor in our polity of Church and State.

Definition of the term Evangelical.

At the outset the precise import of the term Evangelical should be stated. By Evangelicals we mean members of the Church of England who look directly to the Bible as a whole,—not to one part only, or another, but to all the parts taken together; who accept the teaching of the Book of Common Prayer which lays down that nothing is to be prescribed as necessary for salvation except what is found in Holy Writ or can be certainly proved thereby; who, while treasuring their inheritance as members of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, adhere to the name Protestant, as historically significant and as still applicable; who affirm that the Church, though she did not begin with the Reformation, was reformed thereby; that the Book of Common Prayer, though framed by the Divines of the Church and accepted by her members at large, has also been accepted by the State, so that there might be a legal union between Church and State for the better support of religion among the people.

The story of the modern Evangelical Movement may be

briefly sketched in this wise. There was at least one pioneer for it in the seventeenth century—namely, the Reverend Benjamin Jenks.[1] Preaching after the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, he stood forth in support of the Reformation Settlement. He continued his work well into the eighteenth century, and in a memoir of him it is said that he was one of the Reformation Divines "with the Bible in one hand and the Articles in the other"; and that after him "they have maintained an unbroken, ever-broadening line that shows no sign of abating." Sir James Stephen, in his essay on "The Evangelical Succession," begins with the eighteenth century. He shows how, at the outset, "the enemies of Christianity in the beginning of that century failed to accomplish its overthrow. . . . Joseph Butler was induced by the same adversaries to investigate the analogy of natural and revealed religion. . . . The depression of theology was aided by the state of political parties under the two first princes of the House of Brunswick. . . . Such clergymen as Doddridge and Watts lamented the decline of their congregations from the standard of their ancient piety. The austere virtues of the Puritans, and the meek and social, though not less devout, spirit of the worthies of the Church of England, . . . were discountenanced by the general habits of society." It appears that even William Pitt, then Prime Minister, alluding to the Evangelicals, wrote to Wilberforce in deprecatory terms about his "serious friends." Mr Seeley, the historian, writes that in the eighteenth century there had been "a great collapse" of religion, and that the candle, which Latimer had spoken of

Beginning of the Evangelical Movement.

Depressed state of Religion in eighteenth century.

[1] See memoir of him by the Rev. Charles Hole, 1893.

at the stake, was at this time burning so low that many feared lest it should be put out altogether.

Momentum afforded by Wesley and Whitfield.

For the Evangelical Movement, which was destined to raise up the English people from these conditions, the momentum was afforded by John Wesley and George Whitfield, both clergymen of the Church of England. Sir James Stephen says that in their days at Oxford they were fated to "accomplish a revolution in the national character." Macaulay writes of the life of Wesley as "a popular account of a most remarkable revolution." It is to be remembered that Wesley's followers afterwards carried Christian teaching across the Atlantic. Of Whitfield it is said by Sir James Stephen that "a large proportion of the American Churches . . . may trace back their spiritual genealogy by regular descent from him." Then

The early fathers of the Movement.

in England there followed the "fathers" of the Movement which had been started. They were Henry Venn (the first of the three Venns), Toplady the sweet singer, Romaine the preacher, all English clergymen, and John Thornton the eminent merchant. Mr Eugene Stock the historian writes of them, "They preached dogmatic truth—the truth revealed in the Bible, the truth enshrined in the English Prayer-Book." Thus from the outset their position was not negative but actually aggressive for the truth. Further, Sir James Stephen says that of this Movement "there were four Evangelists—John Newton the great living example, Scott the interpreter of Scripture, Milner the ecclesiastical historian, Venn (John) the systematic teacher."

Howard and Prison reform.

Among the first-fruits of the Evangelical spirit was the work of Howard the Prison Reformer. The son of a

Churchman and bred up in the Church, he was twice married, and both his wives were Churchwomen. He buried them in English churchyards. He himself died in Southern Russia tending the sick, and catching the infection. His monument stands in St Paul's Cathedral. The life he led is an honour to his country, and even raises our estimate of human nature. He devoted the severe labours of many years and nearly the whole of a considerable fortune to a visitation of the prisons of Europe. The basis of his conduct was religion, and in that respect he was intensely evangelical. Such a lifelong work as his is fruitful not only in the results which it by itself produces, but in the example it affords, and in the reforming ideas which it diffuses among others. The Howard Society, formed in his memory, still exists in continuous usefulness.

Raikes and Sunday Schools.

Another result was the establishment in 1780 of the system of Sunday Schools by Raikes of Gloucester, an Evangelical Churchman, and reference will be made hereafter to the system.

The poet Cowper.

The poet of the movement was William Cowper, who placed his beautiful verse at its service during the latter part of the century.

The Evangelicals at Clapham.

As the early fathers of the Movement passed away before the end of the eighteenth century, so fresh men were coming on. Among these was John Venn (son of the Henry Venn already mentioned), who was rector of Clapham. Henry Thornton (son of John Thornton), a Member of Parliament and a promoter of all good causes, resided there; so did William Wilberforce; and other devoted men gathered round them. It has been said by Dr Overton,

the Church historian, that "there was hardly any missionary or philanthropic scheme that was not either originated or taken up by this band of Evangelical friends." Outside, among the men connected with them, were Richard Cecil of St John's Chapel, Bedford Row; Josiah Pratt, a man of lofty soul; and Charles Simeon, a clergyman of Cambridge, of whom much mention will be made hereafter. These and other Evangelicals, while some of their brethren had become Methodists, remained Churchmen, "realising the privilege of their membership in the Church."

The Eclectic Society.

Among these men there had existed an "Eclectic Society," which discussed many things, and, among them, measures for Evangelisation amidst the heathen. They often met in the vestry belonging to Mr Cecil. Ultimately communications were opened by them with Simeon. About that time Wilberforce wrote in his journal, "Missionary meeting—Simeon, Charles Grant, Venn; something, but not much done. Simeon in earnest." In the beginning of 1799 the Eclectic Society had a meeting to discuss the missionary principle in a general way. The result was that they asked Simeon to attend a meeting on March 18, which has become memorable. Simeon took the matter up positively by propounding certain questions—"What can we do? When shall we do it? How shall we do it? What can be done?" And from these four questions immense results have flowed. He proposed, and they agreed, that they could not join the two societies then existing and recently formed, namely, the London Society and the Baptist Society—that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, a junction with which had been contemplated, would be out of the

question,—and that they would "stand forth alone"—that is, they would act by themselves immediately, and that if they could not at once find the missionaries they required for the heathen in all lands, they would at least begin by sending out catechists. From these deliberations sprang perhaps the greatest effort by private enterprise ever known in the annals of Christendom. There was yet another meeting of the Eclectic Society held to form the rules of a possible missionary society. Next, on the 12th April of that year, there was a meeting in an inn at Aldersgate, attended by sixteen clergymen and nine laymen, John Venn being in the chair, and a society was constituted amongst the members of the Established Church for sending missionaries among the heathen, which society, after some variations of name, became ere long styled "The Church Missionary Society," to consist entirely of members of the Established Church.

Foundation of Church Missionary Society.

Here, then, may be closed the review of the eighteenth century, which had some most unfavourable features in its religious life, but which saw the growth of the modern Evangelical Movement, destined, as will now be shown, to produce mighty results in the nineteenth century. In justice to the past, however, it must be recollected that two societies had been founded—that for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1701, and that for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge at the very close of the seventeenth century. Neither of these societies were flourishing at the end of the eighteenth century, though happily they have since risen to great prosperity and activity.

Close of the eighteenth century.

At the entrance to the nineteenth century the Church

Missionary Society stands in the forefront. This Society has just celebrated its first centenary—that is, April 1799 to April 1899—and its history has been finely written by Mr Eugene Stock. During its first decade—that is, up to 1809—it had done but little, and was in its infancy; the times were against it; men engaged in Eastern wars and politics doubted the possibility of converting the heathen; its income rose from a few hundreds to a few thousands annually, and it was sustained by the fervent faith of Simeon. In the second decade it emerged from infancy into vigorous youth, and its income soon rose from £20,000 to £30,000 annually. A Training College for missionaries was established at Islington with the help of Bickersteth, a member of a noted Evangelical family, and was under the supervision of Daniel Wilson, who afterwards, as Metropolitan, spread Evangelical principles all over India. After 1830 the Society suffered vicissitudes. Besides the Evangelical Movement there was another well-known movement of a different kind springing up in the Church; dreadful mortality had more than decimated some of its missionary establishments in Africa; the final emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies threw work upon it more than its means could sustain; it had deficits in its treasury which were filled up by the munificence of its committee; two of its greatest henchmen, William Wilberforce and Charles Simeon, passed away; the post of secretary was taken up by Henry, son of the John Venn who presided at the founders' meeting, and grandson of the Henry Venn who was an Evangelical leader in the last century. Then came the accession of Queen Victoria. Archbishops and Bishops

Beginning of Church Missionary Society.

Its infancy.

Its early struggles.

joined the Society, thereby raising its influence and authority at home. The question of appointing Missionary Bishops had been settled, and the Society had contributed one-half, the Government the other half, of the salary of Selwyn, the first bishop of New Zealand. The president was the Earl of Chichester, who held that office for half a century, and was constant in his attendance. Then followed the Society's jubilee, April 1849; by that time its income had risen to £104,000 annually. It had in the fifty years sent out 432 missionaries, maintaining the supply despite the discouragement of frequent mortality; established 102 missionary stations; had 13,000 communicants, and probably 100,000 adherents. It held a jubilee meeting in Exeter Hall, at which Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford, remembering his great father, alluded eloquently to the little meeting in the inn in April 1799, and said "that he hardly knew of any period since the time when the whole Church of Christ was gathered together in that Upper Chamber, with the door shut upon them for fear of the Jews, when mightier issues were pending in fewer minds." A thank-offering fund was raised of £55,000, the Queen and Prince Albert heading the list of subscribers.

Growth of Church Missionary Society.

Its jubilee.

Then followed a decade of further progress; upon that there supervened various Evangelical movements at home which caused the Society's supporters to think more of domestic missions than of foreign missions; for a while there was a decline of the missionary spirit in England. But then came a revival; a strong impulse was given to the mission cause in India by the private conduct of many great Anglo-Indian administrators. At length, after many

Its further career.

advances and retrocessions, anxieties and perplexities, success checkered by partial failures, the Society pressed on with unconquerable force to its last two decades, from about 1880 to its centenary in 1899, with higher success and larger resources than it had ever before attained. Its annual income now stands at some £370,000, and has increased by £150,000 within the last twenty years. At this date its ordained missionaries then in employment numbered 393, its other workers 6600, its mission stations 469, its communicants 64,411, its adherents 240,876, its young people under Christian instruction 83,877, its patients relieved by medical missions 67,000. In addition to the work represented by these results, there were the linguistic labours, the study of the numerous native languages, the preparation of school books of many kinds, the aid given in the translation of the Scriptures—the creation, in fact, of a new literature, sacred and educational.

Its centenary.

Figured statements can give no idea of the world-wide character of the work. In the concluding chapter of Mr Eugene Stock's summary of the history, a picturesque description is given of a journey round the world in company with the Society. From England, crossing the Atlantic, he stops at all the principal stations of the Society. First he lands at Sierra Leone, Lagos, and the Niger delta; then he goes round the continent to Mombassa, on the way to Lake Victoria Nyanza and Uganda. From this dark part of the continent he proceeds to Cairo, then to the holiest places in Palestine; on to Bagdad, to several places in Persia, and so to India. He goes right round the whole Indian Empire. Thence he proceeds to

Its world-wide operations.

Southern China, and on to the middle region of that Empire; and so he reaches Japan. Then he visits his Evangelical brethren in Australia and New Zealand, one of the earliest scenes of his Society's work. Then, keeping to the south of the equator, he visits the beginnings of our own South American Mission. Then, crossing the United States, he reaches Canada, and in Manitoba, British Columbia, and the North-West Territories he finds his Society working with its Bishops and missionaries, crossing the prairies to preach to the North American Indians. Even on the shores of Hudson's Bay he perceives an Eskimo learning the Gospel. So he recrosses the Atlantic homewards.

Its great resources.

It may be well to show the cost of this private enterprise for the sacred cause in many regions, separated from each other and from England by vast distances. From the published accounts it appears that the Society raised 2¼ millions sterling in the first fifty years up to its jubilee, and 9¾ millions sterling in its second fifty years up to its centenary, or 12 millions in all, the exact sum being £11,932,496. This sum may no doubt have been partly raised from the munificence of private persons, but it is more largely supplied by subscriptions or collections made all over England, and by the contributions, the mites, from the humble men and women, young and old, in the English villages. If any one is fearful lest in the present time religious faith should be sinking, let him study the details of the history and note the resolution, the tenacity, and the faithfulness with which the operations have been pressed on, and this, too, with energy in growing ratio up to the latest dates. Then let him say whether this is not indeed

Its method of gathering them.

that faith which looks to the promises that mountains may be moved by it. Nor do the present statistics at all show the return vouchsafed for this sacred outlay. We must think not only of the hundreds of thousands of adherents, and of those under Christian instruction in the present, but also of the host, now quite incalculable, of those who, whether as converts, as inquirers, as adherents, as gospel-taught, as almost persuaded, have died in at least some idea of the Christian faith and hope. Nor has the benefit been confined to the heathen. The constant declaration in England itself of the evangelising duty towards the heathen among the English cities, towns, villages, and countless private homes, has greatly stimulated the Evangelical Movement. This has reacted on the home-life in countless ways, and has exerted a wondrous influence in creating and maintaining that enthusiasm for the cause of religion, that unselfish devotion and sympathy for others, that uprightness of individual life and character, which is the highest work of the Church of England. The repute of England, however high it may otherwise have been, is hereby raised still higher. We must ever pray that her moral influence in the world may be commensurate with her power and her dominion; the work of the Church Missionary Society has conduced to this happy end.

Besides the Church Missionary Society, which is all its own, the Evangelical Movement has given impulse and support to other excellent societies working in a similar direction or towards objects similar to its own: in some of these, indeed, it has a goodly share.

The elder societies of eighteenth century.

In the first place, there are the two old societies, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, truly venerable societies, which had already been the mothers of several Churches or communities beyond the sea. Although these two societies did not belong to the Evangelical Movement, yet the Evangelical leaders often subscribed to them, and sometimes became incorporated members; indeed at one time it was considered whether they should not throw all their energies into these two societies, which were at this time, 1790-1800, in a depressed condition. But their Evangelical aid did not seem likely to be accepted, so it was decided to form the Church Missionary Society, as already seen. Then as the Evangelical Society began first to move, then to flourish and prosper, so the two elder societies did the same, though perhaps in a lesser degree. It may almost be said that in 1817 the Evangelical proceedings were among the considerations which induced the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel—that had been founding churches in the Colonies and even in the United States, that is, for Europeans — to extend their work to the heathen. The Evangelical Society then wished them God-speed, formally and officially assuring them that they would be doing incalculable good to the heathen and to the Moslems, and entreating their own Evangelical members to help that venerable body by their contributions. This generous spirit on the part of the Evangelicals at this time was further shown by their sending collections, made for their own Society, to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge instead.

The Bible Society.

In 1804 the Bible Society[1] was founded; in the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures it undertook much that the infant missionary societies were at that time quite unable to attempt, and it still, up to the present time, renders priceless service to the missionary cause. It continues to flourish under the joint auspices of the Evangelicals and the Nonconformists; yet its inception belongs to, and its main support is derived from, the Evangelical Movement. Sir James Stephen, alluding to the Clapham men, says that "from them came forth a majority of the first members of the governing body of the Bible Society, its earliest ministers or secretaries, and above all, the first and greatest of its Presidents, John, Lord Teignmouth."

The Religious Tract Society.

To the Evangelical Movement is due the formation of the Religious Tract Society[2] about that time—1799; an excellent society, which is sustained to this day partly by Evangelicals and partly by Nonconformists, and which has just celebrated its centenary, having published and diffused a vast amount of religious literature.

The National Society for Education.

Nearer home the National Society for Church Schools, though now supported partly by Evangelicals and partly

[1] Since its foundation in 1804, the Bible Society has helped forward the message of the Gospel in some 350 languages and dialects, while its issues of Bibles, New Testaments, and "Portions" of the Bible for the same period, amount to 160,009,393 copies. The above results have been accomplished at a total expenditure of £12,969,455, 6s. 11d.

[2] The influence of the Religious Tract Society may be estimated from the following figures. During a period of one hundred years, the grants for Home and Foreign Work amount respectively to £848,787 and £733,933, while the total circulation, in all languages, during the same period has now reached the enormous number of thirty-three thousand millions (33,000,000,000).—*Vide* 'The Story of the Religious Tract Society for One Hundred Years.' By S. G. Green, D.D.

by other bodies in the Church, did really begin with the Evangelical Movement about 1811, mainly through the efforts of Mr Bell.

Reform of the Criminal law.

Sir Samuel Romilly, who did much to mitigate the severity of the Criminal law, was always much affected by the Evangelical Movement.

Wilberforce and the Slave Trade.

Next the abolition, first of the Slave Trade, and then of Slavery in the British dominions, is attributable mainly, if not entirely, to the Evangelical Movement. William Wilberforce, its principal leader among the laymen in 1786, really devoted himself to a religious life, which was to be chiefly marked by efforts for the abolition of the Slave Trade; at the same time Thomas Clarkson's essay at Cambridge for the same object was published, and Granville Sharp formulated his plan for settling liberated slaves in Sierra Leone. Throughout their joint lives, which ended about the same time, Wilberforce was an intimate friend of Simeon. Another friend was Zachary Macaulay, father of Thomas, afterwards the celebrated Lord Macaulay. When, after twenty years of parliamentary labour, Wilberforce saw the Bill for the abolition of the Slave Trade pass the House of Commons, he received the memorable and eloquent congratulations from Sir Samuel Romilly, who also belonged to the Evangelical Movement. Later on when Wilberforce, having long been agitating against Slavery in the West Indies, found himself obliged to retire from public life, because of advancing years, he nominated Mr (afterwards Sir Fowell) Buxton as his parliamentary executor, with an entreaty that he would prosecute the case to the end. Mr Buxton was connected with the Evangelical

Buxton and the abolition of Slavery.

Movement; he worked on in Parliament till in 1833 the slaves were ordered to be set free in the West Indies, and twenty millions sterling to be paid in compensation to the slave-owners. He had the satisfaction of knowing that Wilberforce, then on his deathbed, thanked God for the victory.

Evangelical chaplains in India.

In no part of the British Empire has the influence of the Evangelical Movement been more felt than in British India. During the latter half of the eighteenth century spiritual darkness brooded over the brave Britons who were laying the foundations of the coming Empire. Now just before and just after 1800, with the help of Charles Grant, the politician, also connected with the Evangelical Movement, Simeon procured the appointment of chaplains in the East India Company's service, who would not only minister to their fellow-countrymen in the East, but would also be pioneers of evangelisation among the natives. In this way the Gospel was first preached among the Indians by the Company's chaplains before any missionaries could be sent out by the Missionary Society. Some of these chaplains have been famous in Christendom — Henry Martyn, Brown, Corrie, and Thomas Thomason, father of an illustrious son James, the future governor. Later on, past the middle of the century, in the crisis of the mutinies and in the darkest days politically which British India has ever known, her safety in a large degree depended on officers of a strongly religious temperament and much affected by the Evangelical Movement. Such were John Lawrence, Henry Lawrence, Robert Montgomery, Donald M'Leod, Henry Havelock,[1] Herbert Edwardes, Reynell Taylor, Bartle

Evangelical rulers in British India in 1857.

[1] He was a member of the Baptist community.

Frere, Lake, John Nicholson. It would be hard in the history of any empire to find a more illustrious group.

Christianity among the Jews.

The Society for diffusing Christianity among the Jews has been, and is to this day, mainly promoted by the Evangelical Movement. Simeon and his fellow-thinkers were great supporters of it. Whatever may be the degree of success that may have been achieved by it respecting conversion to Christianity, it has undoubtedly caused Christians to regard Jews in a manner more Christianlike than that which had been displayed in former times; and this in itself is a great moral advantage, inasmuch as the old dislike towards the Jews, in itself contrary to the Christian spirit, has been the parent of the anti-Semitic feeling in Europe which is proving very injurious.[1]

Church Pastoral Aid Society.

In these earlier days the Church Pastoral Aid Society was most useful in providing faithful clergy for the parishes in the interior of the country. At first an attempt was made by the Evangelical leaders to constitute the Society in conjunction with other bodies in the Church, but this ended in the formation of another Society. Thenceforth the Church Pastoral Aid Society belonged solely to the Evangelical Movement, and has continued in full efficiency up to the present time.

Religious literature by Evangelicals.

The foundation of a distinctly religious literature, in a graceful, popular, attractive style, had been laid by ladies imbued with the spirit of the Evangelical Movement.

[1] Simeon received from Cadell the publisher £5000 for the copyright of his works, of which sum he gave £1000 to the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews; £1000 to the London Clerical and Educational Society, and £1000 to the Church Missionary Society. Quoted, p. 468 of G. H. Townsend's 'Everyday Book of M. N. Literature' (Chandos Classics).

Foremost among these was Hannah More in the early part of the century; and even before that, for Bishop Porteous in 1798 eulogised "the extraordinary and widespread influence of her writings among the poor, counteracting the impious pamphlets circulated by infidel societies." It continued with ever-increasing success to the end of her valuable life in 1835. It is stated that within two years two millions of the weekly stories by herself and her sister were circulated. The humanising effect of this pious literature is inestimable. But even these figures give no adequate idea of the vast numbers of copies of her other edifying works which were required at this time, so great was the demand for their circulation. Felicia Hemans was first incited to write religious poetry by Heber. About 1830, indeed, almost up to her death in 1835, she was much engaged in sacred lyrics. Maria Charlesworth wrote books exciting sympathy for the poor which had an enormous circulation, and were translated into foreign languages. Frances Havergal wrote hymns still renowned for beauty, and her works, always inculcating piety, were so popular that near 850,000 copies of them were sold. Charlotte Elliott lived with her father at Clapham, and her mother was a Venn. Her hymns are still widely known in the Christian world. Mrs Charles began to write works which extended the Evangelical influence, some of which have been translated into foreign languages.

Evangelical influence of Simeon.

Before proceeding to another part of this great subject it may be well to notice the close of Simeon's career—inasmuch as for forty years no man did more than he to strengthen the Evangelical Movement. He died in 1836,

full of years and honours indeed; but the honours were not such as the world considers to be rewards. He never received, and probably never sought, any dignity in the Church; he died as he had lived, a Fellow of his College in Cambridge, and the incumbent of his parish in the town. Take him all in all, he was probably the greatest parish priest that ever adorned the Church of England. Certainly no dignitary of the Church, perhaps not even any group of dignitaries, enjoyed such influence as he exercised for a whole generation. His object remained to the last what it had been from the first, to provide godly and efficient men for the ministry in the parishes. Himself setting the highest example in patient charity (despite a natural impetuosity of temperament), in the study of the Scriptures, the entire scripture taken, not in pieces, but as a whole, in the training of young men for a holy calling, he taught curates without number, and he made arrangements for providing them with suitable spheres. Thus from Cambridge his influence radiated to many places in England, and though he has been dead for two generations, it still radiates. His work among the undergraduates of his day was unbounded, and the respect in which he was held by the University at large was attested by the concourse of dignitaries as well as members of the University, who formed an assemblage equal to that of a public funeral, when he was buried in the chapel of his illustrious college. Indeed it may be said that all Cambridge followed him to his grave.

Close of his career.

The general narrative has now been brought up to the year 1836. Some, perhaps, may think or have thought that at

Notion of Evangelical decad-

ence controverted.

this time is the culminating-point of the Evangelical Movement; that it has had its day, that it has done its work, that other movements are arising to which it must yield; that its traditions, admittedly noble, remain, but the national function of doing good to mankind is devolving upon others. Much must have happened, or may be still happening, to dissipate such a notion, but if it chances to linger in the mind of any one, it is contrary to historical fact, as may here be shown. In 1836 Fowell Buxton was in full force, the inheritor of the Evangelical leadership, and next after Wilberforce and Simeon the most effectual prime-mover which the Movement had possessed. In 1837 and 1838 great efforts were put forth to protect the aborigines in Africa and Australia, and to shorten for the negroes the apprenticeship, which was a sad grievance; and further exertions were made to carry into effect against the slave trade those principles which had been sanctioned by the British Parliament. In 1839 the formation of the African Civilisation Society was begun. In 1840, under Mr Buxton's arrangements, a meeting for this purpose was held in Exeter Hall, Prince Albert presiding, which was described by contemporaries as "a magnificent display of national feeling" — many noblemen, afterwards historic, being present. In 1841 the Niger expedition was equipped with every appliance to ensure success—and it would have succeeded fully had not the climate killed more than one-third of its white members and disabled the rest. It was for a time defeated in its moral and religious purpose, but it laid the first foundation of a success which has ended in what the world sees to-day in Nigeria as a part

Expedition for African civilisation.

of the British Empire. Undismayed by failure from causes beyond human control, Mr (now become Sir Fowell) Buxton pressed on, and so did his Evangelical friends, various benevolent schemes till his death in 1844. Among the potent helpers of this time, and indeed of times already passed, was Charles Hoare, son of Henry Hoare the banker. He was Archdeacon of Surrey, and had long been a strong supporter of the Movement.

London City Mission.

Between 1830 and 1837 inquiries were set on foot by David Nasmith and others which resulted in the formation of the London City Mission, mainly by Evangelical Churchmen. Fowell Buxton accepted the treasurership in 1835, and at the first meeting the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, then a clergyman of the Church of England, presided, and from that time the Mission bounded onwards.

The Parker Society.

About this time, 1840, the Parker Society, instituted for reprinting the works of the Fathers and early writers of the Reformed English Church and of foreign reformers, was nobly successful, and had some seven thousand members.

Young Men's Christian Association.

In 1843 the Church of England Young Men's Society was founded partly by Evangelicals. In 1844 a little band was gathered together which grew into the Young Men's Christian Association, begun by an Evangelical Churchman, and consisting partly of Churchmen and largely of Evangelicals outside the Church. Further mention of this great Association will be made hereafter.

Stowell, MacNeile, and Melvill.

About this time the Evangelical cause was advocated with unsurpassed fervour by two preachers, Canon Hugh Stowell and Dean Hugh MacNeile; nor should we forget

the remarkable influence exerted by Canon Henry Melvill, "the most popular preacher in London," for a long period of years.

By the year 1845 Florence Nightingale, being in the flower of her age, was occupied in benevolent pursuits, in which she was to be hereafter associated with one of the greatest of Evangelical standard-bearers, Lord Shaftesbury, who has now to be mentioned.

Evangelical continuity unbroken.

Enough has been already said to show by itself the unbroken continuity of the Movement from one decade to another, that is from 1835 to 1850, without any intermission of work or any want of workers, without any gap, or interruption, or even momentary eclipse.

Appearance of Lord Ashley on the scene.

But, in addition to all this, there was the fact that Lord Ashley (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury) with his band of Evangelical supporters had arisen about 1835, and thenceforward had illustrated the Movement largely by efforts and successes in Parliament almost year by year till 1850.

As this great and good man, whether as Lord Ashley or as the Earl of Shaftesbury, was for more than half the century one of the mainsprings of the Movement, it may be well to pause for a moment to consider what his Evangelical character was.

His Evangelical character.

In giving his last instructions to his biographer he said, "I have always been, and please God shall always be, an Evangelical of the Evangelicals." Again, he said, "I have worked with them constantly, and am satisfied that most of the great philanthropic movements of the century have sprung from them. I stand fast by the teachings held by that party, but I am not, and never have been,

a leader of it." Certainly he was a devoted son of the Church of England, pure, simple, and reformed. So late as 1884 he recorded, "So long as the Church of England stands firmly by her formularies, her Articles, and her Homilies, and so long as she crowns all by declaring that the Bible is the sole ground of her faith, rejecting tradition and every argument of human invention, so long may she confidently assert that she is a true Church in the sight of God." With him, as with his historic predecessors in the Movement, the significance consisted not only in what he did himself, but in what he induced others throughout all classes to do. Thus each one of his achievements represents a mighty force of numberless persons whom he set in motion. His excellent biographer (Mr Hodder) writes of him in 1887, two years after his death in 1885, "He was the founder of a new order of men who, inspired by his example, and infected with his enthusiasm, followed and still follow in his footsteps." Now, with much sympathy for this statement, it should be said, in partial correction, that he took up the standard as it fell from the dying hands of his predecessors, and carried it onwards with a new or fresh set of men to succeed the elder followers of the departed chiefs. It is quite true that the school of Evangelical philanthropy in which Lord Shaftesbury virtually presided is still existing up to the very end of the nineteenth century.

His sound Churchmanship.

The life, then, of Shaftesbury, the great and good, is a part of the Evangelical Movement, so it may be well to recount very briefly what that life amounted to. In 1885 the Duke of Argyll said, "The social reforms of the cen-

Testimony in House of Lords to his work.

tury . . . have been due mainly to the influence, character, and perseverance of one man—Lord Shaftesbury." This tribute was endorsed by Lord Salisbury, who said, "That is, I believe, a true representation of the facts."

His own account of his life up to 1850.

On Christmas day 1851, having succeeded his father in the earldom, having given up the title of Lord Ashley, which he had rendered historic, and being about to exchange his career in the Commons for one in the Lords, he penned a most noteworthy memorandum. He asks himself certain questions, and answers them. Of these the first is, "What have I done for the public? . . . 1. Seventeen years of labour and anxiety obtained the Lunacy Bill in 1845, and five years' labour since that time have carried it into operation. It has effected, I know, prodigious relief. . . . 2. Seventeen years, from 1833 to 1850, obtained the Factory Bill. The labour of three hundred thousand persons, male and female, has been reduced within reasonable limits, and full forty thousand children under thirteen years of age attend school for three hours every day. . . . 3. A Commission moved for in 1841, reported in 1842, and in 1843 passed a Bill to forbid labour of females in mines and collieries. No one can deny the blessed results of this measure. . . . 4. In 1845 passed a Bill to regulate and limit labour of children in print works. . . . 7. Two years of intense labour, without pay, on Board of Health, especially in season of cholera, and lately on water-supply to the Metropolis. . . . 9. This for Parliament. Out of it have spared no trouble nor expense (and both have been excessive) for ragged schools, model lodging-houses, Malta College, emigration committees, and meetings by day and

night on every imaginable subject. . . . Perhaps we may rejoice in an awakened attention, though but partially so, to the wants and rights of the poor, to the powers and duties of the rich, both in Parliament and out of it, in a freer, safer use of religious sentiment and expression, perhaps in an increased effort for spiritual things and in greatly increased opportunities."

Testimony to his worth by Sir Robert Inglis in Commons.

In moving a new writ for Bath, the seat vacated by Lord Ashley, Sir Robert Inglis said, "Lord Ashley should not be withdrawn from the first ranks of this assembly, the scene of his labours and his triumphs, without some parting expression of respect and regret. . . . He has been emphatically the friend of the friendless. Every form of human suffering he has, in his place in this House, and especially every suffering connected with labour, sought to lighten, and in every way to ameliorate the moral, social, and religious condition of our fellow-subjects."

Presentation by Lancashire operatives.

The Lancashire operatives did not forget their hard-working and self-devoting benefactor. They doubtless knew that the Countess had been from the first his adviser when he embarked on philanthropy as his career. So they had a beautiful bust of him, executed by Noble, the cost of which was defrayed by subscriptions in pence by the operatives. An assembly of four thousand persons was gathered together in the great Hall at Manchester for the presentation.

The inscription on the pedestal is as follows:—

"Presented to Emily, Wife of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, by the Operatives of the manufacturing districts of the North of England, as a token of esteem and regard for

the persevering and successful efforts of her noble husband in promoting, by legislative enactment, a limitation of the hours of labour of children, females, and young persons employed in mills and factories. August 6th, 1859."

Lord Shaftesbury: subsequent career.

As the Earl of Shaftesbury in the Lords he fully retained that celebrity in all good causes which he had won as Lord Ashley in the Commons. In 1851 he accepted the Presidentship of the Bible Society, which he held till his death. He began, stirred, and fostered the movement for the Ragged Schools in London, which before the Education Act of 1870 was even more indispensable than it would be now. He interested himself especially in some of the humblest classes, such as the chimney-sweeper and the shoeblack. He helped personally the missionaries working under the London City Mission. He laboured for the establishment of good lodging-houses for the poor. He co-operated with George Wright of Lancashire for the improvement of prisons. He originated and organised the Sanitary Commission for the army after the Crimean War, wherein his services were emphatically commended by Miss Florence Nightingale. He did his best to incorporate Christian instruction in the education to be afforded under the Act of 1870. So far back as 1830 he had objected to the plan for the Council of Education, because it seemed to him defective in this respect. He was zealous for missions among the training-ships of the navy, for the Scripture readers in the army, for the missions among deep-sea fishermen. He also contributed to Protestant missions in some countries on the continent of Europe.

Commendation of him by Florence Nightingale.

After his death in 1885 there was a funeral service in

Westminster Abbey, when honours were paid to him such as have never been paid to any other Englishman. All the benevolent societies—more than two hundred—with which he had been connected sent deputations, and no State funeral could have produced so diversified and representative a display as this. On that day the poor were saying, "Our Earl is gone." His funeral service in Westminister Abbey.

Inasmuch as Lord Shaftesbury had been working together with bands of Evangelicals in each one of these very numerous works of goodness, and as many of them are still surviving in activity, the significance of this funeral consists in the proof it affords of the widespread effect of the Evangelical Movement right up to the end of the nineteenth century.

Since the death of Lord Shaftesbury in 1885 several events have occurred to show the vitality of this movement up to the present date.

In 1894 the Young Men's Christian Association celebrated its jubilee. In the introduction to that report it is stated, "On June 6, 1844, twelve young men met in one of the rooms of a business house in St Paul's Churchyard, and banded themselves together for the purpose of seeking to promote the spiritual welfare of their fellow young men. And after fifty years there gathered together in the centre of the same city nearly two thousand delegates, representing five thousand Young Men's Christian Associations, with a membership of half a million of young men to celebrate the jubilee of the work so humbly inaugurated." In his address of welcome the Archdeacon of London (Sinclair) said, "All those who hold to the great doctrines of the Reforma- Jubilee of Young Men's Christian Association.

tion should be made welcome as workers and members." He went on to state, "There are now some 5158 centres scattered throughout the world, with a total membership of 467,515. In the United Kingdom there are 843 centres with 87,464 members. In London there are 73 Associations with a roll of 11,684 members. But striking as these figures are, they give no idea of the vast multitudes of young men who are brought under the influence of the Association in various ways, through the afternoon services, the outdoor addresses, and through personal friendship and example." Sermons were preached in Westminster Abbey by the Bishop of London (Temple), and in St Paul's Cathedral by the Bishop of Ripon (Boyd Carpenter); both sermons were distinctly of an Evangelical tendency. The original founder of the Association, Mr (afterwards Sir George) Williams, was the President on this great occasion. He was saluted with the utmost respect by all the foreign delegates from the various countries of Europe and America as the originator. He is an Evangelical Churchman. Professor Barde, on behalf of the foreign delegates, said, "With what emotion we surround one" (Sir George, the President) "amongst those who fifty years ago, in this metropolis, on his knees deposited the imperceptible seed from which has sprung up the tree he is able this day to contemplate." Lord Shaftesbury himself was the President for many years of the London branch of the vast Association. Mr W. Allcroft, an Evangelical Churchman, was one of the knot of men who purchased Exeter Hall for the Association. No doubt the larger share in the work of the Association throughout the world belongs to the Evangelicals outside

the Church of England, but enough has been said to show what an important share the Evangelicals in the Church have had and still have.

The share which the English-speaking race across the Atlantic have is shown by the delegate from Ohio, who stated that "there are now in existence 1397 Associations in the United States and Canada, reporting a membership of 232,930." The property in buildings owned by them is valued at sixteen millions of dollars.

Jubilees and centenaries Evangelical to end of nineteenth century

Indeed the close of the nineteenth century is an era of Evangelical jubilees and centenaries. The Religious Tract Society has just celebrated its centenary; there is no space here to indicate the various sections of its enormous literary business, but the subscriptions received by it, irrespective of its business, during the century cannot be less than two millions sterling. The Bible Society will ere long be celebrating its centenary; its receipts from the beginning up to the present amount to near thirteen millions sterling, of which about half may be claimed as donations and subscriptions. The Church Pastoral Aid Society and the London City Mission are of about the same age, and both have celebrated their jubilees; the receipts of the former in little more than half a century amount to two million and three-quarters sterling, and of the latter to two millions sterling.

In this Essay the subjects are so many-sided and so broadly scattered that, although chronological order has been preserved so far as conveniently practicable, yet many interesting topics have unavoidably fallen out of that order. It will be well to mention them here before concluding.

The Church Sunday School organisation.

The origin of the Sunday School system in 1780 has been mentioned. In the early part of the nineteenth century much attention was given to it by Evangelicals, and later on by Simeon especially. When the centenary was celebrated in 1880, Lord Shaftesbury unveiled the memorial of Raikes at Gloucester. There are now two organisations in London: one of the Sunday School Union, which is understood to be undenominational, but receives help from Evangelical Churchmen; the other of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, which is Evangelical.

Religious support to Temperance cause.

The Evangelical Movement has afforded consistent support to the cause of Temperance on religious grounds, as against the vice and wickedness of intemperance, quite apart from any disputed questions of legislation. It was from this point of view that the Church of England Temperance Society was set on foot between 1862 and 1873, through the exertions of Canon Ellison, quite irrespective of other organisations for Temperance. It worked through religious persuasion on the minds and consciences of Church people, largely Evangelical, and also through the example of parochial clergy, but still with help and guidance from other bodies in the Church. When Canon Ellison retired in 1890, the Bishop of London (Temple) became president.

The Bishop of London's "Fund for Augmenting Church Work in the Metropolis" is now supported by other bodies in the Church besides the Evangelicals. But its inception was Evangelical, as it was originated by Bishop (afterwards Archbishop) Tait, and is held by his able biographer to be the chief work of his episcopate.

Other societies exist by the support of Evangelical Church-

men, the good deeds of which there is not space to chronicle. Among these are the Colonial and Continental Church Society, the monuments of which are to be seen in many lands; the South American Missionary Society, which contains the germ of great things; the organisation for Scripture reading among the men of the Army and Navy, a truly patriotic purpose; the Mission to Seamen; the Thames Church Mission; the Deep Sea Fishermen Mission,—all thoroughly national; the Mission to Navvies, whereby religious light and humanising influences have been shed over at least a hundred thousand of these strong-armed generous people, who for many years had remained outside every parochial and educational organisation; the work among the Roman Catholics, by the Irish Church Missions and the Irish Society, by the Spanish and Portuguese Church Aid Society, and by the Italian Church Reform Society—all which are flourishing and growing. The Evangelical Movement, too, has been of much assistance to the Keswick and Mildmay Missions and Conferences; to the Young Women's Christian Association; to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. If an analysis were undertaken of the collections made in London on the annual "Hospital Sunday," it would be seen how great has been and is the aid afforded by the Evangelical Churches.

Various good works.

In his 'History of Religion in England,' Dr Stoughton writes of the epoch about 1840 as "the age of great societies"; certainly these societies sprang from the Evangelical Movement, and they still thrive, prospering and to prosper in the cause of religion and philanthropy; and since then many societies have been founded through the

The place held by Evangelical Movement in the national life.

same widespread agency. Quite hypothetically, let any one imagine all these being subtracted from the national activity for good, and then consider what would be the poverty of England without them!

Evangelical succession of men.

In conclusion, the term "Evangelical succession" is used by Sir James Stephen with knowledge, for his father was legal adviser on the Evangelical affairs undertaken by the men who met at Clapham. It has been impossible, owing to want of space, to name more than a selected few. But the course of this noble succession has been traced from Benjamin Jenks, John Wesley, Whitfield, the first Henry Venn, John Thornton, Josiah Pratt, Richard Cecil, William Wilberforce, Clarkson, Charles Simeon, Charles Grant, Henry Thornton, John Venn, John Shore (Lord Teignmouth), Fowell Buxton, the Earl of Chichester (President of the Church Missionary Society for fifty years), Lord Ashley, Stowell, MacNeile, Melvill, the second Henry Venn, Edward Bickersteth, and in his final character the Earl of Shaftesbury. Happily there are many men now living to carry on the Movement.

Evangelical succession of measures.

But besides the succession of men, strong and unbroken as it may be, there is the succession of measures, the array of things done under the influence of the Evangelical Movement. Let these things be stated approximately in their due succession. These are then—

The origination of Prison Reform.
The origination of the Sunday School system in England.
The entire formation and carrying on of the Church Missionary Society.
The formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.
The support in large part of the Religious Tract Society.

The entire formation and carrying on of the Church Pastoral Aid Society.
The foundation of the National Society for Church schools.
The abolition of the Slave Trade.
The softening of some among the severest parts of the criminal law.
The abolition of Slavery in the West Indies.
The protection of the Aborigines in Africa and elsewhere.
The first missions and expedition to the Niger.
The reform of the lunacy laws.
The prohibition of employment of women and girls in mines.
The limitation of the hours of young persons in factories, commonly called the Factory laws.
The regulation of the labour of children in print works.
The temporary establishment of a Board of Health.
The origination and organisation of the Sanitary Committee for the Army after the Crimean war.
The formation of the Ragged Schools.
The protection of shoeblacks and of chimney-sweepers.
The formation in part of the Young Men's Christian Association.
The carrying on of the Young Women's Christian Association.
The influence exerted with the masses through the agency of religious literature—the work of women writers.
The entire carrying on of the London City Mission.
Much support to the Church Temperance Society.
The work among the Navvies.
The maintenance of the Army and Navy Scripture readers.
The South American Mission.
The maintenance of the Colonial and Continental Church Society.
The maintenance of the Church of England Sunday Schools Institute.
The work among the Seamen.
The work among the Roman Catholics in Ireland and on the Continent of Europe.
The support of various other Religious and Philanthropic Organisations.
Signal help in the maintenance of Metropolitan Hospitals.

This array of historic facts unavoidably stops short of much that might be adduced to make up the full total of achievement. But, however imperfect it may be, it may serve, so to speak, as an object-lesson both to those who may have doubted in regard to the incessant potency of the Evangelical Movement, and to those whose hearts have never failed them in regard to its surging life and its rising pulsation.

Conclusion.

Lastly, this Evangelical Movement links us with the teachers, the heroes, the martyrs of the Reformation in our own country as well as in other countries, and with the great Protestant communities throughout the world. The devotion of resources for the promotion of the Movement in the nineteenth century has been great. Not less than twenty-one millions sterling have been thus contributed in this time through the principal societies noted in the foregoing pages, irrespective of receipts through many other avenues. Not less than three-quarters of a million sterling are being still raised in each year for the same objects—a greater annual sum than has ever been known before,—irrespective again of other contributions innumerable, and especially those for churches and church schools in England itself. But all this is little as compared with the brain power, the nervous exhaustion, the physical endurance, the capacity for organisation, the strenuous persistency, the flesh and blood! which have been spent and offered up in thankful duty to God for the welfare of His people.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

By E. H. BLAKENEY, M.A.

As flowing rivers are resolved into the sea, losing their names and forms, so the wise, freed from name and form, pass into the divine Spirit, which is greater than the great. He who knows that supreme Spirit becomes spirit.—From the *Upanishads*.

God ought to be to us the measure of all things, and not man; and he who would be dear to God must, as far as is possible, be like Him and such as He is.—PLATO, *Laws*.

In God is life, for the reality of thought is life, and that reality is His.—ARISTOTLE.

This is life eternal, that men might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. . . . God is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.—JESUS CHRIST.

Introductory: Philosophy in its relation to Religion.

THE above quotations may usefully serve for purposes both of comparison and contrast. They illustrate the two primal truths which I have endeavoured to keep steadily in view in writing upon the "philosophy of religion"—first, that the ineradicable instinct of religion in man's heart, so far from being a merely natural product dressed up in the garb of a reasonable conviction, is in reality a necessary datum of man's own self-consciousness; secondly, that while all religious systems contain some element or elements of truth, apart from which they could

possess neither promise nor potency of a nobler and purer faith, it is nevertheless in Christianity alone that the true idea of religion is finally realised.

Hegel, in one of his letters, says, "Philosophy seeks to apprehend by means of thought the same truth which the religious mind possesses by faith." This is profoundly true. Religion is an act of confidence in, and communion with, God; philosophy is the search for and attainment of truth as revealed by God to man's intelligence. However much and often Religion and Philosophy are matched in conflict, they press towards one common goal. "The process of the one is in thought, of the other in worship: the one moves through reflection, the other through emotion; but each, in its development, involves the other, as it has for its aim the truth."[1] And if, in one sense, we advance in philosophy from the serene repose of unquestioning faith, towards a sphere where the calm is shaken and where harassing contradictions emerge from the sea of reflective consciousness, what is this but a necessary step towards the attainment of a deeper, wider faith, a fuller, more rational conviction? The spiritual facts of experience, the phenomena of self-consciousness, the emotions and the thoughts that lie at the heart of man's ethical ideals, determining the direction of his aims and colouring his entire life,—these are by Religion lifted into an ampler field, there to find their last ground and reason in that which comprehends, yet transcends, all—God Himself.[2] The religious consciousness is ever in touch with Reality.

[1] Mulford, The Republic of God, p. 52.

[2] Compare Principal Caird, Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion.

Thought, or reason, is among the most precious endowments of man. It is with this faculty divine that he is enabled to range up and down the gamut of that world of relations which, in endless panorama of change, stretches about and above him. Yet this totality of existence is far from being immediately apprehended by thought, seeing that it is only through experience that man grows into a knowledge of the world and of himself. Indeed, at the first, thought for him is not; his contact with the realm of phenomena is one almost purely of sensation: consciousness he indeed possesses, but it has scarcely risen into fully organised self-consciousness. But, little by little, as the still-dormant thought begins to arouse and prick his faculties into better play, man surveys the wide circle of existence, only to find there much that mocks his search, much that is transient and even unreal, much that seems wrapped in impenetrable obscurity. And so there is slowly forced upon him the conviction that, in the phenomenal world, there is presented to his gaze but one side of reality; and that from him there is wholly shut out the other side, which he imagines to be, not the complement but the antithesis of existence as known to him. Hence life presents itself to his conceptions as an uncorrelated dualism of thought and matter, nature and spirit, good and evil, which are set over against each other in perpetual opposition, with no intelligible bond of union to resolve their differences and disclose the underlying harmony.

Man's first conceptions of reality.

It is only in the last stage in the evolution of the human mind that the world is seen, not to fall asunder and collapse into pairs of contrasted actualities, but to mirror itself

In Philosophy thought attains to

a true knowledge of itself.

and find its final justification in the Absolute Idea. Here alone, however, is true reconciliation to be found. Accordingly Philosophy—which certainly aims at no *à priori* construction of a world abstracted from close contact with visible fact, but simply aims at an interpretation, in the light of Reason, of all experience—is bound, if faithful to its highest ideal, to show the identity of the self-conscious reason with the reason which is in the world—in other words, with actuality.[1] As Hegel notes, "Philosophy is the reconciliation which the spirit solemnises of itself with itself."[2]

The beginnings of Religion.

The beginnings of Religion are wrapt in mystery. Much ingenuity has been wasted in hunting for the secret; but this riddle of the Sphinx has found no Œdipus. According to one theory, the beginnings of religion are to be watched in the first attempts of humanity to discover any *raison d'être* for its appearance in the world at all: man looks out from the isolation of his own personality, and, by a species of transference, dowers the various objects of Nature which strike his attention with all the attributes of personal thought and feeling. Others, again, have supposed that religion began with the worship paid to deified ancestors, and have assumed a glorified procession of ancestral beings who, "having long since passed out of human ken," became endued with supernatural attributes. So did "distance lend enchantment to the view"!

[1] Cf. Hegel's Introduction to the Logic, sec. 6 *sqq*.

[2] "Philosophy stands or falls with the possibility of discovering a reasonable meaning or end in the universe. Every true philosophy is in this sense an attempted theodicy—the vindication of a divine purpose in things."—Seth, Present Position of the Philosophical Sciences, p. 28.

"Naturalism" untenable as a true theory of the origin of religious ideas.

But neither theories like these, nor any other explanation based upon a purely naturalistic conception, are in any degree serviceable in solving the true origin of man's religious instinct. Animism, quite as much as ancestor- or ghost-worship, is obliged to postulate a "something" within man's inmost being, apart from which he would have been utterly unable to form any notion whatsoever of a supernatural or ultra-sensible existence. Rather, it was the abiding presence of a God-idea in the consciousness of the human race that supplied the motive of man's persistent effort to make clear to himself the religious concept which was rooted in the very constitution of his entire being.

It is neither true scientifically, nor conceivable morally, that the God-consciousness of the race should, however remotely, have germinated from degrading fear, or should owe its origin to impressions received through the action and interaction of blind external forces. What has become the explicit inheritance of all men everywhere must have existed implicitly from the first. Contact with the world; the advance of secular knowledge; the rise of art; the love of letters; the emergence of a moral order among men, controlling their wayward passions; the functional growth of social and political life — all these have, by breaking in upon the isolation of human individuality, necessarily deepened and widened this implicit consciousness of deity. And if, at intervals, the finite interests of time have seemed to thrust into a background of indifference the contemplation of the Eternal, the regression has, after all, been but temporary. It is well we should remind ourselves that even degeneration is a true principle of growth—that secular

progress does not exclude the operation of the law of retrogression as one of the factors in the evolutionary process. The line of development is not always a straight one, but moves in advancing circles of change.

The historical quest of the idea of Religion.

A historical account of the evolution of religion would necessitate a searching inquiry into those various forms in which the Absolute has been realised under the categories of human thought. The inquiry would be deeply instructive, but obviously it lies beyond the limits of this discussion. Still, it may not be deemed inconsistent with our present purpose to indicate certain fundamental notions in the rise and movement of the religious consciousness, by confining attention to a few fixed points in the historical development of religious thought. Certain epochs stand out above the general levels of history, during which the human spirit appears to have caught glimpses of the ineffable light of divine truth, in a unique degree, and to have heard the voice of God speaking audibly amid the silences. The records of such epochs, where they have been preserved, must always possess for after generations a profound and pathetic interest.

Such records come to us from many sources. From Vedic India, from ancient Babylon and Assyria, from the wilds of Iran, from the remote parts of China and the Far East—from all these pathways and fastnesses of human yearning and of human thought break echoes that betray a firm recognition of a divine element in the constitution of the world, along with a genuine, and often fervent, desire to participate in life fuller, purer, more exalted than the life that now is. It is the finite spirit of man returning to

its truer self, and refusing to acquiesce in the thought of an unbridged chasm fixed for ever between itself and the Absolute Spirit. "Not without a divine call, and not without divine guidance, did man set out so early and persevere so constantly, in spite of all his disappointments, in the search for God."[1]

Partial realisations of the Religious idea in pre-Christian ages.

Doubtless the effort to attain even a partial conception of all-embracing deity was limited in its scope; the thoughts which lay at the root of the devotion of pre-Christian peoples were rather magnificent intuitions than true knowledge. Those early seers who embodied their convictions and solitary imaginings in the hymns of the Rig-Veda, the philosophical disquisitions of the Upanishads, or in the chants of the Zend-Avesta, were doubtless unconscious of the full significance of that impulse which drove them to pour out their hearts in solemn strain or meditation; but what we must bear in mind is the fact that these struggles of the inner man to get into some intelligible relation with something above and beyond his own finiteness and incompleteness are in themselves clear tokens that the Unseen Spirit was indeed striving with men, and, through much spiritual perplexity, through doubt, negation, and denial, was bringing them to the knowledge of Himself.

Oriental solutions of the problem of

The value of an acquaintance with the products of oriental speculation in the domain of religion is very considerable: such acquaintance helps to make evident

[1] Menzies, A History of Religion, p. 432. For detailed accounts of the various positive religions of antiquity, consult De la Saussaye's 'Manual of the Science of Religion,' various volumes of the Hibbert Lectures, and the works mentioned in Menzies' bibliographical lists, *op. cit.* (*passim*).

Religion: India, Iran, Egypt.

the spiritual solidarity of the human race, which no difference of clime or blood can dissolve. This is true of other than oriental religions, although, in the comparative history of religions, the development of the religious spirit is peculiarly noticeable in India. Let us, however, glance at ancient Egypt, by way of example. The Egyptians were admittedly a people endowed with high intellectual qualities—the monuments of their activity seem almost imperishable. Now, of them it may truly be predicated that their religion was their life. Their social interests, their political achievements, sprang from and centred round their religion, which was the visible outcome of that idea of God which all religion presupposes. It is irrelevant to argue that, whether by a process of syncretism, or (as is more probable) by the grafting of alien worships on to the purer and older cult, scarcely any known form of religion ever touched such a nadir of degradation as did that of ancient Egypt. It was not so in the beginning; and what we should bear in mind is that, as in Vedic India, so in Egypt, men were not, when truest to their nobler instincts, ever content simply to acquiesce in a form of polytheism or of nature-worship, but strove—however inadequately—to preserve the idea of a divinity shaping conduct and creed, and claiming as the whole duty of man that he should endeavour to be like God. And although, as Professor Menzies has justly said,[1] "the religion of Egypt affords the greatest example of a religion the early promise of which

[1] Menzies, *op. cit.*, p. 154. Cf. Renouf's Hibbert Lectures on Egyptian Religion (*passim*); Flinders Petrie, Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt; Budge, Egyptian Religion, chaps. i., v.

was not fulfilled, the splendid moral aspirations of which were stifled amid the superstitions they were too weak to conquer," one noteworthy fact deserves to be recorded—the Egyptians were among the first peoples to formulate a definite doctrine of the soul's immortality. In this conception of immortality is involved the further idea that the human individual, as such, possesses an infinite value. The Natural *per se*, in the light of so exalted a conviction, appears not only limited and contingent, deriving its existence through something other than itself; but, further, "immortality involves the inherent infinitude of spirits." [1] Hence Egyptian religion may be regarded as the counterpart of Indian religion, in which all things had come to be viewed as a universal pantheism, not of Thought but of Imagination, in which the "individual" had withered and sunk before the nameless presence of unlimited spirit, which must ultimately retract into its undifferentiated unity the whole compass of creation.

The attitude of Hellenic speculative thought in the sphere of Religion.

Retracing our steps from Egypt and the East, and following the course of civilisation westward, we arrive at that half-way house in the development of human thought —the early Hellenic philosophy, chiefly among the Greek city-states of Asia Minor. We are not justified in maintaining, as some have maintained, that Greek philosophy originated independently of oriental influences, any more than we should be justified in saying that the European branches of the primitive Aryan language arose independently of the rest of the branches. It is not, of course, a case of derivation: Eastern thought and language, though

[1] Hegel, Philosophy of History.

owning one common ancestry, have developed naturally on independent lines. Few, at any rate, will deny that the mysticism of the Upanishads and of the Buddhistic system must have modified Greek philosophy, however insensibly, and thus powerfully reacted upon the subsequent course of speculative religion. Yet the originality of the Greeks, not alone among the early Ionic philosophers but also in the more direct line of thinkers from Plato to Plotinus, can hardly be over-estimated. This is particularly the case in the sphere of religion, though this is too often forgotten because the debt we owe to Judæa is incalculably greater. Not only was it through Greek words and literature that the new-born faith of Christ, its scheme of ethics, and the records of its first preachers, were proclaimed; but further, the intellectual form which Christianity assumed, when it had grown to be the religion of the world, was largely determined by Greek speculative ideas, as they had reshaped themselves in the later catechetical schools of Alexandria.[1]

The Hellenic ideal of life.

The Greek ideal of life being, above all things, the harmony of existence and balance of all its parts, there was less room within its embrace for that disturbing element of perplexity arising either from the opposition of spirit to matter, or from an abiding consciousness of sin. Hence the lack of speculative doubt in matters of ethic and religion, which is so thoroughly characteristic of Greek thought; agony of soul, scruples of conscience, despair of heart resulting from introspection, the true conception of

[1] Consult Hatch, Influence of Greek Ideals on the Christian Church (*passim*); Hicks, Greek Philosophy in New Testament; Westcott, Religious Thought in the West, pp. 194-252; Inge, Christian Mysticism, pp. 81 *sqq.*

repentance for personal guilt in the presence of a Supreme Righteousness,—these notes of vital religion never marred the finished poise of thought, the imagination of beauty, the sense of easy freedom, which seemed to make life in ancient Hellas move to some perfect music. Yet this very singleness of aim, while it delighted the emotional elements in man's nature, feeding them with dreams of the highest earthly loveliness, left an unresolved discord in the innermost recesses of man's being. The whole ideal of Greek life was, finally, empty and unsatisfying, because it was, by its very nature, incomplete, unrelated to divine issues.

Roman worship and religion.

In the case of Roman religion, we observe that, till it had become affected by Greek or oriental influences, or had degenerated into a mere state-cult, its characteristics were an extreme simplicity and practicality. Opposed to artistic effort and to all speculative inquiries, Roman religion was hard and one-sided; yet the comparative purity of its early ethic demands recognition.[1] During its best period it preserved a childlike simplicity; nor was it cursed, after the fashion of many oriental religions, with the high pretensions and assumptions of a sacerdotal "caste."

Religion: a "psychological necessity."

So far we have watched, from several points of view, the unfolding of the religious consciousness among the peoples of the ancient world. To what conclusion have we then arrived? It seems we are obliged to admit that, despite the fact of religion being a "psychological necessity" of man's life, in each of the cases selected, the later stages of worship have borne witness to a progressive declension in the moral and spiritual scale. Every pre-

[1] Mommsen, History of Rome, vol. i. pp. 206-227 (E. T., ed. of 1894).

Christian religion tells the same story. "The world by wisdom *knew* not God," though it had been truly, if dimly, conscious of His existence. And so we are driven to the conclusion that the divine Idea actualises itself through a medium of continual negations and differentiations; and that the Spirit of God has chosen this mode of self-revelation in order thereby, first to show mankind its need of reconciliation, and then to redeem the world finally to Himself. Contemplating, then, the vast spiral of human progress, we need not hesitate to affirm that—spite of all fallings away, "vanishings, blank misgivings of the creature," tossed to and fro amid the opposing forces of a world of externality—the pulse of religion has still continued to beat; that, from the dawn of history, the religious idea has been advancing, notwithstanding many rebuffs and many backslidings, towards one preordained climax and end—the revelation of God in and through the incarnate Son. "The way of truth," says Clement of Alexandria, with great beauty, "is one; but into it as into a never-failing river flow the streams from all sides."[1]

The dialectic of Thought: Identity in difference.

At each stage of Thought in the world an implicit antagonism is revealed, destined to be resolved, however, ere the divine Idea can return to itself in ever greater fulness of spiritual content. This dialectic movement of Thought, far from being a merely formal process, implies a continuous self-unfolding and explication of the Spirit. Through it we may discern the tide of Being moving forward in majestic sequences; the instability and emptiness of Mere Being coming to the front and receiving its due in that

[1] Strom. i. 5.

which is the negation of abstract being, both of which—as abstract moments in the life of the Idea—collapse into that unity of Thought and Being which transcends difference. The Idea is the Prius; what it becomes it *is*. It already is a completion of its own necessity.[1] It is in this genetic movement of Thought that the thousandfold contingencies and manifold differences of the time-process are overcome; through it opposition is quelled, and negation exhausted in complete affirmation. Eternity has moved out of itself, so to speak, into Time; and now Time has slipped back, recoiled, into the bosom of its parent Eternity, yet no longer the same, but enriched and glorified. The spiritual principle which lies so deep at the silent heart of things has reflected itself, reproduced itself, in each department of the finite order. Let us, for example, mark how the plasmic germ, ere it become a completely articulated system of life, must first build up within its own homogeneity the infinite complexity of the heterogeneous, — which very power of negating its own homogeneity and of differentiating itself is the brilliant stamp, nay, the sign-manual, of the controlling Idea, of design working throughout the entire universe. Thought brings with it its own warrant.[2]

Now the Identity which philosophy requires is, in sober truth, no abstraction, but the actually existing concrete, the sole reality—an identity which unifies through difference, which, through infinite gradations, modifications, and change, reaches — after conflict — the equilibrium of a perfected unity, the peace of Absolute Spirit—God.

[1] Stirling, Secret of Hegel, vol. ii. p. 575 (=p. 717 of new ed., 1897).
[2] Stirling, As regards Protoplasm, p. 47; What *is* Thought? (*passim*).

The self-unfolding of the Absolute. The significance of Christianity as the doctrine of Absolute Spirit.

If we apply the above truths justly, in connection with the question of religion, it may appear less strange than the most natural of deductions that the Infinite Spirit should, in that its self-unfolding, have chosen the rough and stormy path of conflict and antagonism wherein to manifest the infinite treasures of the divine life to the intelligence of man. In the light of this conception we need to study afresh the significance and connection of the faiths of the world: their inner meaning and importance are felt to be higher, in proportion as, from the standpoint of actual achievement, they are found inadequate, because abstract, because guided by no principle of reason. The Absolute religion is not yet. On the other hand, the whole significance of the Christian religion lies in the fact that just *it*, and no other, is—because informed by a rational principle, and obedient to the highest dictates of Thought —the absolute, and therefore the revealed religion. As the conception of God (the absolute Idea) as absolute truth is the result of all philosophy, so must the absolute religion, to which philosophy directs our regard, be the religion of truth and freedom.[1] The Spirit of Truth, as the Redeemer promised, guides us into all the truth; and, while we know the Truth, the Truth shall make us free. The freedom of the individual, says Bishop Westcott,[2] is perfect conformity to the Absolute. "*Deo servire est libertas.*"

Judaism: its unique place in the evolution of Religion.

Judaism, which Christianity presupposes, though indicative of a fuller knowledge of God and a truer wisdom than even the noblest of "ethnic" religions, is in no sense

[1] Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Part iii.

[2] Note on St John viii. 32.

an absolute religion; it still moves in the sphere of relative truth, in the half-light of a partial (though sincere) faith. Its destiny was to educate a section of mankind, thus manifesting its own contingent character: it must needs eventuate in a religion that should be neither contingent nor relative, but absolute in its character and universal in its aim. Judaism is the highest moment in the evolution of the spirit of religion; but just because it is a moment, it has not succeeded in entering the sphere of the concrete universal. Yet, as I have said, Judaism differs profoundly from all other positive religions. Limited as was its grasp of Truth's eternal content, nevertheless what it grasped it grasped with both hands firmly; sundered as was its ideal from the ideal that animates the message of the Gospel, because what is abstract in thought must necessarily be cut off from what is universal, Judaism possessed a clear vision of a divine purpose in things. The Old Testament impresses upon us the fundamental thought of God's moral government of the world.[1] Righteousness, national as well as individual—this was the goal which Judaism sought to attain: righteousness wrought out through suffering, holiness accomplished through all the stages of age-long discipline. And in the Prophets of Israel, in whose lofty idealism the highest level of religious conviction was reached in Jewish history, we find expressed, in burning utterance of faith, the master-thought that "the will of God is the moral ideal of the good, that this will of goodness is the law of the world's history, and that the fates of the nations are conditioned by their

[1] Cf. Ottley, Bampton Lectures for 1897, p. 412 *sq.*

bearing towards this moral purpose of God."[1] Strict in its monotheistic[2] ideal, into Judaism, despite innumerable lapses and failures, was reflected all that was truest and most permanent in the monotheistic systems of the world. Upon it, as a firm foundation, was reared the fabric of Christian belief, a belief destined to reorganise man's entire spiritual constitution, and to manifest the eternal purposes of God in the redemption of mankind. Hence we insist upon the truth of the proposition that, while no faithful efforts of religion or philosophy have been wholly vain or inconsequent in their issues, it is only in the revelation of God through Christ that both philosophy and religion have finally fulfilled their destiny.

Christianity contrasted with Judaism.

In point of contrast, there is a twofold aspect of religious truth exhibited in Judaism and Christianity. The former aimed, in diverse methods, at the systematisation of religion; the latter at informing religion with an organic principle of active growth. Hence, whereas in Judaism righteousness was objectivised through transitory media of symbolic worship, which—to the thoughtful worshipper—then and always typified that "reasonable service" which was the positive ground of all and every observance—Christianity, by way of complement as well as contrast, fell upon the seed-plot of the human heart as a germinating spore, instinct with the quickening ardour of a new life, for all after-ages to develop and to mature. What signified it

[1] Pfleiderer, Gifford Lectures on the Philosophy and Development of Religion, vol. ii. p. 42; J. Caird, Fundamental Ideas of Christianity, vol. i. Lect. i.

[2] For the unique character of Judaic monotheism, cf. Jevons, Introd. to the Hist. of Religions, p. 388 *sqq.*

that the explication of the secret could only be effected through mortification and conflict, and tears wrung from unwilling eyes, through abnegation of self, and the sacrifice of all temporal interest and ambition upon the altar of infinite Reason and Truth? Nay, was it not ever thus that the Eternal Purpose conceived of its own perfect fulfilment?

> "But here is the finger of God, a flash of the Will that can,
> Existent behind all laws, that made them, and, lo! they are."

This, at least, is the dialectic of the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters.

The value of the Old Testament as a factor in the life of Religion.

Let us remark, however, that, *primarily*, even the Old Testament is not solely a religious *system;* it is, first and foremost, as already noticed, a divine revelation—not yet indeed as Love, but as Righteousness. To Judaism (which is, in itself, less than the sum of the religion of the Old Testament, because contracted into a single channel for the express purpose of enabling the religious idea to flow within certain fixed boundaries, free of deteriorating influences from without) belongs the *primum mobile* of all sound religious life—namely, a firm conviction of sin on the one hand, and, on the other hand, an equally resolute conviction of the holiness of God. And so, in its prime insistence upon this strict acknowledgment, Judaism was careful to avoid all speculative ideas of religion: it even averts attention from the contemplation of a world beyond the grave—though without affirmation or denial in regard to this question—because, above all

else, it is intent upon "the Eternal and Infinite Presence dwelling in the here and now."[1]

The spirit and the world.

When we regard the world of natural phenomena and of human life, we cannot but be impressed by the prevailing divisions and struggles that are presented to us on all sides: Nature warring with herself, man in endless conflict with his fellow-man, passion and hate struggling against the instincts of love and purity. We are confronted with a welter of mutually exclusive antagonisms, of repulsions and oppositions that seem to admit of no reconciliation, but to be, in their very being, eternal. Yet, after all, this cycle of ruthless differences and conflicts, alike in their aspect towards one another and towards God, must of necessity possess a relative value alone: surely it is no absolute antagonism that we are face to face with; that would be tantamount to admitting a ceaseless dualism at the heart of the cosmos, an irreconcilable diremption of subject and object, which would inevitably lead to the self-contradiction of absolute scepticism. Underlying all that difference lives that Unity in difference which is the true ground of all things; and it is this and nought else that can give meaning to those very antagonisms that, springing from it as from an inexhaustible fountain of being, are decipherable in the light of that supreme Unity alone. Spirit must return to itself; God must be known as infinite subject before He can be known as object; the manifoldness and contradictions of the world must find their

[1] For a brief review of the essential features of Judaism as an advancing manifestation of the Living God, cf. Westcott, Epistle to the Hebrews, pp. lv. 494.

explication and interpretation in that unity of Intelligence which is the presupposition of their existence.

Christ—the perfect Revelation of the Father.

It must be conceded, then, that Judaism was unable to solve the problem submitted for solution, the problem of a world at enmity against God. The theocratic consciousness of Judæa had indeed clearly grasped these three central verities—*i.e.*, that man, in consequence of a falling away from the fixed standard of divine righteousness, had forfeited divine grace, and was alienated and divided from God; that man demands, by virtue of his personality and in obedience to the imperative laws of his own being, a reconciliation with God; that such reconciliation is, somehow, attainable. But, so far, man had arrived at no clear and consistent notion as to the way in which such reconciliation was to be realised and made a practical fact of experience. Now the function of Christianity was, in essence, this,—to demonstrate not only that reconciliation is possible, but that it is actually being realised for man through the One Mediator of the new covenant — Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Hence Christianity stands in a fixed relation to Judaism in this respect that, while the latter was largely a pessimistic theology, the former is based on optimism, alike in the theological and philosophical reference. "Jewish pessimism was always closely connected with a conviction of sin,—an aspect of moral consciousness evinced more continuously and deeply by the Hebrews than by any other people." [1] Now Christian

[1] Wenley, Aspects of Pessimism, p. 2. Compare the instructive chapters dealing with this subject in Dr E. Caird's 'Evolution of Religion,' vol. ii. (esp. p. 117 *sqq.*)

optimism is simply the recognition that, in an intelligible world essentially related to the Intelligence for which it exists, in a world linked by the closest of ties to the spiritual centre of the Universe itself,—in a world, finally, that was meaningless if not itself the expression of Intelligence, a spiritual being as such is a partaker in the divine life. And the grand principle of Christian optimism is summed up in the three words "die to live," because death itself is the means to higher freedom and realisation of self. That is what St Paul meant when he told us, in burning words, that Christ not only "abolished death," but "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Nor was Christ employing any mere figure of speech when He announced that He Himself was the Truth and the Life, the one way whereby mankind must come unto the Father. For the life of God and the history of the universe are made manifest in the Absolute, the pure Thought, the infinite Subject and Ground of all being, unfolding Himself in the Son,—Spirit revealing itself to Spirit in an eternal process, an endless and sublime generation,—God making Himself object to Himself in the Son whom He loves with an everlasting love. But while, in the progressive unfolding of the Godhead, the object, as Son, is differentiated from God as Absolute subject, differentiation is ever striving towards reconciliation and return; and so, in and through this return of subject into itself, the difference is overcome, and Spirit knows itself one with the Eternal. The Absolute has passed out of Himself, has externalised Himself, only to return again to Himself. Absolute Subject has indeed posited itself as

The truth of the Christian idea, both in philosophy and religion.

Object, but solely in order to manifest itself, with ever greater plenitude of infinite love and wisdom, in the absolute Subject-Object. Such is the doctrine of the Godhead as explicitly revealed in Christianity: it is the history of creation read from within, in the light of a self-revealing Spirit.

We have reached, at this stage in our discussion, a point at which we are bound to consider the Christian faith in some detail both in its immediate contact and conflict with the world, and in its ultimate end and aim as the revelation of a divine Will. "In every religion of the world is to be found, distorted and exaggerated, some great truth—otherwise it would never have obtained foothold; every religious evolution has been the struggle of Thought to gain another step in the ladder that reaches to Heaven. That which we ask in Revelation is that it should take up all these varieties into itself, and show how that at which each of them aimed, however dimly, has its interpretation and realisation in the objective truth brought to light by Revelation." In other words, it is the function of Christianity to correct the partial truths of all those forms of faith which preceded its advent into the world, and, by showing itself able to satisfy the rational requirements of man, as well as to touch to great issues man's emotional life, to vindicate itself as a revealed, as the Absolute, religion.[1]

[1] Cf. Sterrett, Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion, p. 53 (and elsewhere); Caird, Evol. of Religion, vol. ii. p. 296; Jowett, "Essay on Natural Religion" in his edition of the Pauline Epistles; Westcott, Gospel of Life, chap. x.; Illingworth's Bampton Lectures for 1894, p. 75 *sqq.*

The root-idea of Christianity.

At its root lies the idea of a self-revealing God, who manifests Himself less as the creative principle or force to which all things render obedience and homage, than as the ever-present Father of spirits, perfect in wisdom, in power, and in love, with whom the well-spring of immortality is secret yet uncovered, whose never-varying purpose is reconciliation through redemption. Unlike the vast Unknown of early, unlike the great Unknowable of later, philosophic speculation, He alone possesses that perfect personality of which man's personality is a copy; unlike the Zeus of Hellenic theology, to Him alone belongs, by the very nature of His selfhood, perfect freedom. There never stands behind the Christian idea of God the shadow of an intangible, inscrutable Fate, moving darkly along the blind highway of Necessity, ineffable in all terror of mystery, upon whose brow rests the iron crown of doom.

Reconciliation and Redemption: Freedom.

It has just been said that the purpose of divine Redemption was, and ever is, brought to pass through Reconciliation—that is to say, by so quickening every member of humanity's immense organism, through transmission of divine grace and energy, as to assimilate the character of man to the spiritual environment of the life of God. So "we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18). And this reconciliation of which we speak, this summoning of the partial negated life of man's finiteness here into the all-embracing fulness of the divine Unity, —through whom is it achieved, save through Him—the Son—in whom the eternal self-consciousness of the living

God has unfolded itself? Hence St John, in the profoundly philosophic exordium to his gospel, announces Christ as the "Logic," the "Reason" of God, who came forth from God that He might reveal to man's finite and incompleted reason the presence of that "Divine Reason that is perpetually active at the centre of the Whole." Hence man's freedom, equally with man's immortality, is postulated by the Christian religion, because, the more completely the divine order in creation discovers itself, the more clearly is it demonstrated that the freedom of the finite spirit can alone be found by its "complete identification with the freedom of Absolute Spirit." Or, as Stirling has said with great truth and beauty, "It is only when man has realised himself into union with God, *only then* also has he realised his *true free* will."[1] Necessity is then, after all, the truth of Freedom. And it is in the strength of this twofold certainty that man is enabled gradually to dissever himself from the hard trammels of a sensuous understanding, and to recognise that the truth of his own personal reality, as of his moral and spiritual freedom, is inseparably bound up with the reality and persistence of that Infinite Truth which is the ethical postulate of all life and all experience.[2]

The thought of the divine immanence conditioned

If the doctrine of divine sonship cannot be truly separated from the doctrine of divine freedom and omnipotence, equally it cannot be separated from the doctrine of divine immanence. Nay, this truth flows naturally from the con-

[1] "The liberty of man essentially consists in his sonship with God."—Wallace, Lectures and Essays (1899).

[2] Cf. Wallace, Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, p. cxxv: "The moral law is the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom."

by the truth of divine transcendence: the doctrine of God's personality.

ception of Godhead we have reached. Religion haunts no world of abstractions to which it may retire and screen itself from the profane gaze; it powerfully affects all the affairs of life, because it mingles with the throng of mankind and touches the complex personality of man at a thousand points from centre to circumference. Consequently the God of true religion must be a living God, not the abstract God of the finite understanding; not a far-off divinity, like the supreme and ultimate Being of deistic belief, but the very life and nexus of all existence. True, there is a vital sense in which He *is* transcendent; He transcends, just because He is immanent. His immanence in the world is to the end that He may transcend all the limitations of the world, and, gathering up the broken strands of finite existence, weave again the web of creation. The divine presence is a spiritual presence, far transcending the material order, yet dwelling in it and upholding it without pause. God "must be conceived as ever present to sustain and animate the universe, which thus becomes a living manifestation of Himself; no mere machine, or book, or picture, but a perpetually sounding voice."[1] If, as Hegel affirms, the absolute religion is the idea of the absolute Idea in its perfect realisation, then such a religion must be a revealed religion, because God reveals Himself. And His revelation is the self-revelation of Infinite Spirit, eternally creating, eternally working; nature and life and spirit are viewed in the light of it, no longer as separate entities, uncorrelated to one another or to that Source of Life which they presuppose, but as

[1] J. R. Illingworth, Divine Immanence, p. 73 (see his whole chap. iii.)

organic members of the final Unity, the single Totality of Existence—God.

Joined closely with the twofold truth of God's immanence and transcendence goes the complementary truth of His personality. Even in our own personal experience, we are aware that spirit possesses this dual relation to matter, in that it is both immanent and transcendent. But though, as has been pointed out by Illingworth, these two relations are logically distinct, they are not actually separate; they are two aspects of one fact—two points of view from which the single action of our one personality may be regarded.[1] Now, to deny the personality of God is impossible without sacrificing His infinity; for then there would be a mode of action—the *preferential*, the very mode which distinguishes rational beings—from which He would be excluded.[2] But the God whom Christianity reveals is in nowise a *potential* God—"asleep, as it were, in Nature"—but the operating principle of the world, apart from which intelligence would cease to subsist, thought become impossible, and any explanation of the universal order an unsubstantial dream.

The personality of God a guarantee of the personality of man.

Undoubtedly man is conscious of his own personality, that wonderful cord which binds together the multiplicity of his sense-impressions, the manifoldness of his conscious experience, his thoughts, emotions, and will, giving to his fleeting memories, to his cognitions, to his acts, a substantial coherence and a rational significance.[3] It is

[1] Illingworth, Divine Immanence, p. 68; Inge, Christian Mysticism, App. C.

[2] Dr Martineau, Study of Religion, vol. ii. p. 181.

[3] "Personality involves the knowledge of oneself as an object, raised, however, by thought into the realm of pure infinitude,—a realm, that is, in which it is purely identical with itself."—Hegel, Philosophy of Right.

through his personality that man's faculties become raised to their highest power; hence the God whom he is constrained, by the constitution of his reason, to acknowledge, cannot be less adequately endowed than is the creature of His handiwork. Whatever may be predicated of God, He cannot, in truth, be *less* than personal. And while we shall admit that the divine personality differs infinitely from human personality in *degree*, we must hold fast by our conviction that it does not differ in *kind*. Were the difference not quantitative but qualitative, what basis of rational communion could there be found between God and Man? None the less, such communion is presupposed in Christianity, which, apart from it, could possess no sufficient justification for its existence. The nerve and root of personality lies deep in the self-determination of the will; while "the union of individuality in a single manifestation, with the implication that the individuality is the essential and permanent element, to which the universality is almost in the nature of an accident, is what forms the cardinal point in Personality." Man argues, therefore, from the plane of his personality because, inasmuch as it involves reason, will, and love as necessary factors in the texture of its being, it remains the highest phenomenon known to experience. Moreover, as has been remarked with no less justice than truth, belief in the personality of man and belief in the personality of God stand or fall together. "If men deny that God is Spirit, they deny with equal emphasis that man is spirit."[1]

[1] Fisher, Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief (qu. by Illingworth, Bampton Lectures on 'Personality, Human and Divine,' p. 272).

"Die to live." The law of higher life through death.

We have seen, then, that in Christianity are amply realised the thoughts of the personality of God, the immortality of the soul, and the certitude of man's final reconciliation to God, which, however implicated before in the deeps of man's heart and intelligence, were only explicated and (so to speak) universalised by and in the life of Christ. But the pledge of their reality was effectualised, not in the Redeemer's life alone, but also in His death. He must needs confront that dark ordeal, to the end that, through His death, we might have life—for evermore. The unalterable law of the moral world—"death unto life"—could not be abrogated; rather it was realised and transfigured, exemplified and glorified, in the life *and death* of the incarnate Son of God. "He suffered and was buried." But He rose; but He ascended; but He will come again—to judge. The Absolute Spirit, self-externalised, become obedient to the laws of time and space, and made "in fashion as a man," has returned into Itself, not void, but after having accomplished that whereunto It was sent. In this stupendous thought, if anywhere, are we privileged to grasp something of the meaning of the "love of God," which, like the peace of God, passes *understanding*, because revealed by Spirit to spirit and to spirit alone; here, if at all, may we hope to find how completely is love "creation's final law," not less than its primal supposition; for Christ had "translated the divine love of God into the intelligible lineaments of the corresponding human quality," thereby giving to what was ever universal in its range the new glory of a particular application. Incarnation—Death—Resurrection; such is the triple movement of the logic of God; each

several moment in the progress being taken up into a still higher stage in the divine idea, till the consummation be attained, and God *be* All *in* all.

Incarnation, Death, Resurrection —three steps in the process of redemption.

Thus it is that the Incarnation demands Resurrection to complete the harmony; hence the gospel of the Incarnation (upon which many modern writers lay an almost exclusive stress) is, until completed and interpreted through the gospel of the Resurrection, a truncated gospel; it involves only a partial truth. If Christ's earthly life contained the promise, so did His death contain the potency, of an ever higher and more perfect life for humanity through His final reconciliation of the finite with the Infinite. It is a historical fact; nothing can be more certain; but it is also far more: it is an eternal truth. By the Incarnation "is closed the long line of revelations by which God came down and visited His people Israel"; by the resurrection and ascension "is announced and begun the gathering of men upward to God, accomplished once for all in the person of the Son of man, and wrought out through the ages in the power of that first accomplishment."[1]

Faith and Reason—complementary, not mutually exclusive. Is not Love the meeting-point and reconciliation of the two?

There is another aspect of Religion which, if not claiming any detailed treatment in this place, ought not to be wholly passed over. The "complex" of Religion is not the least significant feature in it; neither the application of any single principle can exhaust its meaning, nor can its content be summed up in any isolated proposition. Religion ultimately involves a concrete unity of diverse aspects of divine truth, apprehended by the Reason—which is, as Bishop Butler tells us, the *only* faculty we have wherewith

[1] F. J. A. Hort, The Way, the Truth, the Life, p. 151.

to judge anything, even Revelation itself[1]—appropriated by Faith, realised in the totality of human experience, and guided by Love. Too often, alas! these diverse elements in man's spiritual life are to be found at variance, owing to the imperfect comprehension which friends and foes have formed concerning their place in the economy of religion; —we have seen faith pitted against reason, works matched against faith, and love forgotten as a thing clean out of mind. God certainly does not require of His children intellectual abandonment, or abasement of the reason with which He has endued them; He asks for no assent to propositions, however true these be, that does not spring from a heartfelt conviction of their essential reasonableness; for it is ever a "reasonable service" that He demands, not that species of faith which is too frequently the correlate of irrationality both in belief and conduct. Faith, according to Coleridge,[2] subsists in the *synthesis* of the Reason and the individual will. This is profoundly true. And, in its final outcome, man's knowledge of the universe takes the form of morally reasonable faith. Final faith is *authoritative* reason,[3]—reason not regarded as a single factor in the intellectual life of man, but as an included moment in that life's total outcome, into which other elements have entered. It is in this sense that we may humbly say "Credo ut intelligam"; for, in so far as we submit *in faith* to the *authority* of our true spiritual constitution, we also submit to that true Reason which is the light of every rational

[1] Analogy of Religion, pt. 2, chap. iii.

[2] Essay on Faith.

[3] Prof. A. C. Fraser, Philosophy of Theism, p. 235 *sqq.* (The reference is to the 2nd ed., 1899.)

being.[1] Neither faith nor reason, taken as isolated members of our spiritual life, can supply other than an inadequate solution of the problem of God. Faith *alone*, Reason *alone*, these are but half truths, disclosed to our understanding. To seize hold of either of these complementary truths, and compel it to do duty for the whole truth of which it is but a portion,—this is indeed the compromise of the Understanding. It is impossible for right Reason and right Faith[2] ever to contradict each other; for when we speak of right Reason we signify the infinite reconciling Reason which is divine wisdom,—man's knowing of God, and knowing of himself in God. As for the indispensable character of Faith, Hegel has probably spoken the last word (in a philosophical regard) when he affirms that "the relation of the individual to this sublime truth is that the individual just comes to concrete unity, renders himself worthy of it, produces it within himself, becomes filled with the Spirit of God: this takes place through process within him, and this process is that he has this Faith,—for Faith is the truth, the presupposition that, in and for itself, and assuredly, is Redemption accomplished. Only through this Faith that the Redemption is in and for itself assuredly accomplished, is the individual capable of setting himself into this unity."

God as ultimate Unity of Reality.

It is to this Unity of Reality that all human aspiration, all spiritual effort, all those impulses—the conscious and the sub-conscious alike — that have stirred within men's

[1] May we not say that the function of all rational faith and disciplined belief is to fit the soul of man to become a perfected harmony, attuned to the pitch of God?

[2] Cf. Pascal, Thoughts ("Of the true Righteous man," *passim*).

hearts, driving them on in their search for ends, are ever struggling to attain. Reason and Faith, Faith and Works, beheld in the clear light of this unifying principle of being, grow co-ordinated, related together as necessary factors in the evolution of man's spiritual life. No longer do they appear to emerge as distracting and mutually exclusive elements in the struggle after God. Of all which things indeed the truth is revealed in the profoundly satisfying and comprehensive conception of Christianity as *Absolute* Religion. "It is not the mind alone," says Tolstoi, "that understands God; it is life that makes us understand Him." We *know* whom we have believed; we know that we know *Him.* This knowledge is a spiritual apprehension; for only to spirit is it given to search all things, yea even the depths of God.

God—the Unity which comprehends, but does not abolish, differences.

Thus far we have essayed to outline, in some slight fashion, what Christianity *is*, in a positive reference. It remains to state briefly, in the negative regard, what Christianity excludes, not by virtue of its dogmatic system, but because, in the highest sense, it is a rational faith.

In so far as the world is merely material, it remains unintelligible.

First, it excludes, by the very condition of its own organic life, that attitude of mind to the world-problem which is commonly designated "materialism." Materialism, as a system of philosophy or explanation of the cosmic order, is inadequate, because it moves in a vicious circle. The infinite it postulates is a bad infinite. In the evolution of the universe from primordial atom and molecule; in the reduction of the phenomena of consciousness and thought to a mere function of matter; in the interpre-

tation of mind as a mode of motion,—throughout this specious and fashionable body of doctrine there is harboured a persistent fallacy. "You cannot," says Principal Caird, "get to mind as an ultimate product of matter, for, in the very attempt to do so, you have already begun with mind."[1] In other words, Intelligence must have its origin in that which is implicitly intelligent. Matter, in itself, explains nothing finally—least of all its own presence; nor can matter be conceived as knowing itself.[2]

Agnosticism. "Reality not a mechanism but a Realm of Ends."

Again, Christianity excludes the notion that because God must—if He exist at all—necessarily be infinite, and man is, by his nature, finite, therefore man is unable, not only to know God, but even to know whether He be or be not. Man cannot subsist upon an unresolved negation,—a negation that does not finally become affirmation. The agnostic position is arbitrary, and inconsequent to boot. It seeks to maintain an impossible attitude of mind toward the deepest problems that can present themselves for solution; it involves the notion of man as a self-conscious being, enisled in a (practically) limitless world of phenomenal existence, in awful and utter isolation, without any bond of union with that Spirit or Intelligence behind all, whose

[1] 'Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion,' p. 88. Cf. also pp. 94-101. Herbert Spencer has, in 'First Principles,' made a redoubtable attack on Materialism, which attack deserves careful study. For a good criticism of the materialistic dogma see Orr, 'Christian View of God and the World,' pp. 141-150 (and reff. there). Generally, A. J. Balfour's 'Foundations of Belief,' Green's 'Prolegomena to Ethics,' and Dr J. Ward's admirable Gifford Lectures, 'Naturalism and Agnosticism,' may be consulted.

[2] In so far as the world is merely material, it *must* remain unintelligible. On the other hand (to employ Hegel's pregnant dictum), "Spirit is bound to include Nature as a factor in its own being."

existence—as we have seen—is implicated in the very constitution of things. The thought of God is not as of some far-off, ineffable object of awe, sundered infinitely from His creation, but of *that which cannot not-be*. This is not a dogma externally imposed upon man's intelligence, as the modern unbeliever (or misbeliever) pretends; it is simply a necessary truth, inasmuch as God, the objective principle by whom all things are and are known, is a spiritual being, able to reveal Himself in and through spirit.

Christianity not an ethical code, but a *life*.

Further, Christianity excludes the substituting of a merely ethical principle for the concept of the "living God," not less than it excludes the notion of a pantheistic "substantia" in which human life is not taken up and realised, but only negated,—which is not the goal of spirit, but its grave. We seek a living God, a living Father, no abstract Absolute, no mere impersonal Force; we ask for nothing less than a personal God, with whom we, as persons, may hold personal relations,—One in Whom and for Whom and by Whom "we live and move and have our being." So Christianity predicates personality of God,—a thought which need not cause difficulty, if we are careful to remember that, when we speak of God as "Person," we do not affirm of Him all that is involved in our imperfect and limited personality; and, also, that personality is in no sense a synonym for individuality. To conceive of God as a Person is not to contradict thereby His infinity. The limitative idea of personality is not inherent in the thought of personality *in itself*, but only to those physical and semi-physical associations that have gathered about it. True, we are driven to represent God to our intelligence under

sensible forms, simply "because the human mind cannot possibly conceive God except behind the veil of human language and of human thought."[1] Yet we know that, despite the limitations under which human intelligence labours, the ultimate idea of God must be wrought out *sub specie æternitatis*. Professor Knight[2] has stated the simple fact when he says: "The whole of the sensuous imagery under which the divine nature is portrayed is merely an aid to the imaginative faculty."

Christianity the true reconciliation of Morality with Religion.

Once more, in Christianity—perhaps for the first time in recorded history—religion and ethics find themselves united, and at peace. In one sense, each *is*, indeed, the other. Implicated in the teaching of the great Prophets of Israel; overshadowed in the general spiritual decadence that supervened after the intense outburst of religious emotion that accompanied the Return from the Captivity; raised to a primal principle by the Founder of Christianity, in whose holy sight there was no such thing as religion dissociated from morality;—the truth that morality was, before all else, religion in effectual action became the inspiration of the early Ecclesia, and the renovating influence of a society sunk in the immoralities of an already effete Paganism. This living verity became the major factor in the divine education of the race. Devotion toward, and self-surrender to, the sinless person of Christ became the ideal of the New Order; the person of Jesus, with all that it implied, became the fulcrum of the moral

[1] Max Müller, Philosophy of the Vedânta, p. 127.

[2] Aspects of Theism, p. 165. In ordinary consciousness the notion of deity is a *Vorstellung;* this is translated by Philosophy into a *Begriff*.

life. Such a central doctrine cut asunder that dishonourable compact between religion and everyday life, in obedience to which religion was to go on its way unmolested, busied with rite and ceremony and the letter of an external commandment, while morality moved forward disjoined from those high sanctions of vital religion which are the presupposition and basis of its adequate working. In Christianity religion and morality are identified in and through their difference. Identified—yet different. This is no idle paradox. Their difference is one of degree, not of essence; for whereas morality implies the obedience of the will of man to the law of God, religion is the first-fruits of a heart's act of spiritual surrender. There is no gap, no severance, in that bond of blessedness uniting these complementary activities of a single principle that dominates man's whole being. The root is not the flower, nor the flower the root, nor either of these the stalk; yet they cannot be severed without fatal injury to the plant of which each is a necessary and composite part. Religion, in its wider life, gathers into itself the obligations of morality, the imperative of conscience, the affirmations —the everlasting "Yea"—of man's heart crying aloud after the life-giving Source and End of all aspiration and joy. Religion is the crown of the world's moral order. The ladder which has its foot on earth must have its point of rest in heaven.[1]

Christ Himself the "terminus a

Lastly, we find Christianity unfolded to us in the teaching of its divine Author, not as a system of belief, but as a *living ideal* of belief, requiring to be translated into

[1] Cf. Martineau, A Study of Religion, vol. ii. pp. 31, 32.

quo," as well as the "terminus ad quem," of Religion.

action. Christ is the standard of moral character—His life the criterion of morality. Faith in Him, devotion to Him as the Incarnate Son of God and express image of the Eternal, obedience to those unalterable principles of right which he laid deep down at the foundations of the human spirit, sealing His testimony to their truth by His own death,—these are the things that arrest our attention as once again we consider the meaning of the Gospel in all its complexity and fulness. "The process of evolution of Christian life is a process towards Christ. He is the aim, the goal, the end towards which Christian life in the individual and in society ever tends; and He is also the means without which the end can never be reached."[1]

Christ—the Church—the World. Ecclesiasticism not necessarily Christianity.

Immersed in a world of contingency and of rude fact, and overcome all too early by the ever-restless world-spirit, the Church which Christ had founded gradually succumbed to political influence, and fell away from the simple faith which characterised its first affections. The unflinching love of truth as a divine gift yielded to that easier mode—adherence to the mechanism of a doctrinal system; and the Religion which, centred in a Person, was to have christianised the world, was itself largely paganised. Hence its character became radically altered, as its attitude to divine truth shifted; and, less than four hundred years after the great scene upon the Mount of Redemption, the religion of personal holiness and the faith that could behold God not through a glass, darkly, but face to face, had given way to a sacramental system, and an elaborated ritual, channels through which the grace of God was to flow at the inter-

[1] Iverach, Evolution and Christianity, p. 227.

cession of a specially constituted priesthood. The Religion of a Person had been succeeded by the Religion of a Church. And whereas personal righteousness was the key-stone of the spiritual churchmanship of Christ and His apostles, devotion to Church ordinance and rite became the key-stone of the state-churchmanship of their successors.

The true principle of Protestantism.

How this false ideal of religion was advanced and developed from the fifth century onward, throughout the long ages, till the break up of the "Catholic" ideal in the sixteenth century, it is not now pertinent to inquire. It is enough to say that, despite its faults of temper and its defective adherence to the logical results of the creed it formulated, to Protestantism belongs this indefeasible honour—it disinterred the lost ideal of the Church; nay more, it was instrumental in bringing the sorrowing soul of the world back to the feet of the historic Christ. Protestantism, in short, has justified the spiritual freedom of mankind. As a most competent critic[1] has rightly said, "Protestantism is significant as the contradiction and antithesis to a system of collectivism which hindered the clear sense of personal relation and responsibility to God."

Objection is often filed against Protestantism that it is

[1] Principal A. M. Fairbairn, in his 'Catholicism, Roman and Anglican,' p. 136. Kaftan, in his thoughtful, though not always convincing, work, 'The Truth of the Christian Religion,' has admirably defined the nature of *true* Protestantism: cf. esp. vol. i. (E. T.), pp. 61, 62 *nn.* Much of the so-called Protestantism of the present day is a mere caricature of the original, being in the main a political creed, and not religious at all. Compare a remarkable series of essays by Froude, reprinted in his 'Short Studies,' viz., "Conditions and Prospects of Protestantism" (vol. ii.); "Revival of Romanism" (vol. iii.); and "The Oxford Counter-Reformation" (vol. iv.)

merely a negative creed, born and cradled less than four hundred years ago amid the throes of an intellectual revolution. The objection is fallacious enough. In some sense or another, Protestantism is as old as human history itself. True, it has a negative side; but it has a positive side as well. In the former reference, it assuredly "protests" and sets itself against everything that tends to draw a veil between man's spirit and the Infinite Father of spirits, who has entered into relations of love with mankind by the manifestation of Himself in and through His Son. But, in its positive aspect, it witnesses *for* God against imperfections and sins that touch man's life at the core, rendering him unable and unwilling to rise to the true enjoyment of the freedom of the spirit—that freedom wherewith Christ has made us free. Regarded in the light of the philosophy of religion, all such questions as Apostolic Succession, Validity of Orders, the Power of the Keys, authorised Instruments of Grace—in fact, the whole framework of "canonised sacerdotalism"—not only cease to harass the intelligence, but even to possess aught but a secondary interest. Such questions, together with the investigations they necessitate, move mainly within the sensuous element of manifestation and contingency. The historical import of such matters may, of course, be considerable, but in themselves they do not bring with them the attestation of the spirit and its truth.

The Conclusion of the whole matter.

The life of man is realised in the law and unity and freedom of the spirit; its fulfilment is accomplished through the perfect work wrought out by Christ in the infinite love of God. And the satisfaction of all man's earthly travail, and the consummation both of his faith and of his hope, lie

there—in the unclouded vision of the Eternal, "whom, not having seen, we love." Is not that the final goal, "to be filled with all the fulness of God"? And this yearning, ineffable, for that goal of endless fellowship and communion with the Absolute Spirit, is not merely of the essence of our moral and spiritual life—in one sense it *is* that life; not indeed perfectly developed, yet still there; begun, not ended; still awaiting its fruition, but none the less immutably true and real. And this fruition is, of all things, the most sure: "the word of the Lord abideth for ever." God Himself is the home and everlasting refuge of all the spirits of His redeemed and reconciled children.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

A. The Atonement.

The word "Atonement" (Gr. καταλλαγή) has two distinct shades of meaning: (1) the reconciliation of two estranged parties; (2) the effect of sacrifice offered or intercession made on behalf of the guilty. The word bears witness to the existence of an obstacle standing in the way of man's communion with God. Between God and man there is estrangement. "On man's side this estrangement is the direct consequence of his sin. On God's side it is the direct consequence of His holiness and His love. Because He is holy and loving, He cannot be indifferent to sin."[1] Any theory of the Divine Love, therefore, which regards it as equivalent to indulgence is radically imperfect.

According to the Old Testament the power of atonement lay in the shed blood of the sacrificial victim; in the New Testament that concept—which is fundamental—is so extended as to involve the idea of divine virtue, liberated through death, and made the

[1] Art. "Atonement," in Hastings' 'Dictionary of the Bible,' vol. i. p. 198.

power of an endless life. In the New Testament we learn how "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." There is no thought here of enmity on God's side, but rather of a means whereby, man's enmity being overcome, man's spirit might transcend the limitations of the world and rise into unclouded communion with the Absolute Spirit. "In *principle*," says Professor Orr,[1] "the Incarnation is the declaration of a purpose to save the world. It is more: it is itself a certain stage in that reconciliation, and the point of departure for every other. . . . The perfect union of the Word with humanity is already a reconciliation of the race with God in principle." Hence the Atonement and the Incarnation are not to be regarded as separated factors in the history of Redemption, but as complementary moments in the progress of the redemptive idea. The "Atonement" alone makes clear the purpose of the Incarnation of the Son of God: for us it is the well-spring of immortality, and the life-in-death of the Redeemer the means whereby guilt is, not merely put away from us, but wiped out, expunged for ever. Sin implies alienation; atonement brings with it reconciliation, in and through those divine influences flowing, for all future time, from one momentous act in past time.

The various theories devised to explicate the central ideas of the Atonement obviously do not exhaust its real and abiding content. Life is ever fuller and wider than theory. It is perilous to press any one aspect of this majestic verity to the exclusion of any other aspect. But we cannot, without missing the kernel of the whole, omit the fact that primarily it is the revelation of the character of God as a God of holiness, love, justice. When we affirm that the essential idea of the Atonement is that of a moral fact, that "the only possible reconciliation between God and man is the one that involves the surrender of man's will to God";[2] or, again, that "salvation can only come by the surrender of the sinner to God, not of God to sin"[3]—these are accurate statements, indeed, of an infinite truth, but they do not exhaust that truth. It is certain that

[1] Christian View of God and the World (p. 296 of ed. 3).
[2] R. L. Ottley, Doctrine of the Incarnation, vol. ii. p. 311.
[3] Fairbairn, Christ in Modern Theology, p. 481.

"God does not redeem us merely by revealing His love, but that He reveals His love by redeeming us." Nor can any formulated scheme of the Atonement be other than a presentation of a partial truth which leaves out of sight that the *death* of Christ was, equally with the love which it reveals, the main factor in human redemption. Mysterious that idea is, without doubt; is it, however, less mysterious than the arraigning sense of guilt which underlies it? If the Cross is, in sober fact, the expiation of the past, not less is the Resurrection the consecration of the future: "in one is the death of sin; in the other, the birth of righteousness."[1]

Doubtless much of the difficulty experienced in apprehending the Protestant doctrine of the Atonement (which is the Pauline doctrine) arises from the imperfect and misleading analogies that have been instituted between divine and human relations. But of this we may be sure, that it is in the searching light of the doctrine of Redemption by Atonement that we are enabled to complete, and justify, that rational interpretation of the world which is unfolded for us in the revelation of the Fatherhood of God in and through the Incarnate Son.

B. The Moral Law.

It is stated by Canon Newbolt, in his recent book on Religion (p. 212), that "as regards the fundamental laws of morality, God orders them because they are right; they are not merely right because God orders them." This is an almost universal commonplace of philosophical writers nowadays. I am bound to dissent from such teaching. Dr Johnson is reported to have maintained[2] that "what is right is not so from any natural fitness, but because God wills it to be right." This appears to me the just view. *If* it be true that morality is the *necessary* outcome of the divine nature rather than the expression of the divine will, is not this tantamount to affirming that, behind God, lies some inscrutable Other

[1] Martineau, Seat of Authority in Religion, p. 481. Liddon, The Divinity of our Lord, p. 484 *sqq*.

[2] See Boswell's Life of Johnson (p. 538 note, in "Globe" edition).

(termed the Law of Righteousness, the Moral Law, or what not) to which God Himself is constrained to bow in obedience? In other words, the God we worship is no longer the Absolute. But, then, what becomes of the sovereignty of God? Is it, after all, but a limited monarchy? Is His omnipotence merely a relative term, something short—and therefore infinitely short—of actual omnipotence? In which case, this Law of Righteousness, this awful impersonal Entity, is for us sole deity, not that Father of spirits Whom we have indeed "ignorantly worshipped."

As I conceive it, morality is simply the organised expression of the divine will: what God wills, that alone is right. Wrong is the negation of, the refusal to obey, that sovereign "fiat" of the Supreme Intelligence which *is* the Moral Law. And, *apart* from such expression of the divine will, I find neither morality in the Cosmos nor ethical affection in the human heart. Duty ceases to have any significance or meaning, unless we regard it as the obligation imposed from a Power *without* upon the soul of man *within*.

The sacred law of Duty, the imperative of the Moral Law, is indeed inscribed on man's heart, but in invisible characters. Not till the heart of man is turned and held close to the holy fire of Infinite Love do these characters shine clear; but so warmed and so vivified, they spring forth into instant strength of legible symbol, stamped with the everlasting sign-manual and signature of God.

C. The Nature of Revealed Truth.

The Revelation of God is a progressive self-unfolding of the divine will and character, rather than a limited disclosure of the divine activities. It is, therefore, less an outward and incidental than an inward and essential process; a spiritual and eternal truth, not a temporal application. "God does indeed reveal Himself to man in historic action; but this outward revelation only becomes a real possession through the soul's appropriation of it according to its true meaning and power."[1]

[1] Steevens, N. T. Theology, 1899, p. 186.

APPENDIX.

THE REFORMATION SETTLEMENT.

By J. T. TOMLINSON.

The two Reformations.

The movements which led to the Reformation in England were of a twofold character—political and religious. The two were quite distinct both in order of time and as to their principal actors. Long ere the question of divorce arose, Henry VIII. had determined to break the power of the clergy. When Anne Boleyn was but two years old, Henry deliberately altered the form of the Coronation Oath before he consented to take it. The promise to "maintain the liberties of Holy Church" was then qualified by the addition of the words "not prejudicial to his jurisdiction and dignity Royal"; and among other changes he inserted a pledge to "endeavore hymselfe to keepe unite in his clergy."[1] Bishop Stubbs says: "If we may believe the law reporters, as early as 1515 he had declared himself determined not to allow any superiority of external spiritual courts in a country of which he was sovereign; and there are signs, in Wolsey's history, that the imminent danger of the King's taking advantage of the statute of præmunire was in his mind long before he was actually sacrificed."[2]

Political power of the priesthood.

The clergy had a majority in the Upper House of Parliament, then by far the more powerful branch of the Legislature. They were not only "privileged" by exemption

[1] Ellis's Original Letters. Second Series, vol. i. p. 176.

[2] Lectures on Mediæval History, p. 253.

from trial in the King's courts, but had also independent courts in which every layman might be dealt with "for his soul's health" (or otherwise) on the merest rumour or "scandal." When Henry came to the throne the clergy were held in almost universal detestation; and this strong anti-clerical feeling, we are told by Bishop Stubbs, was due "especially to the ever-spreading and rankling sore produced by the *inquisitorial, mercenary, and generally disreputable* character of the Courts of Spiritual Discipline—an evil which had no slight share in making the Reformation inevitable, and which outlived the Reformation, and did its worst in alienating the people from the Church reformed." [1]

Not only was the oath of fealty to the Pope taken by each bishop inconsistent with the allegiance due to the Crown; but the laws administered in the ecclesiastical courts were foreign in origin and based on principles fundamentally at variance with the spirit of liberty which inspired the national common law of England. Feudalism was still a powerful and living tradition, and the clergy were rapidly becoming the landlords of the entire realm. For, since the "Church" (*i.e.*, clergy) never gave back anything, but was always acquiring, it became merely a question of time how soon the entire nation would be living under the "Church" as its tenants.

The clergy-church an *imperium in imperio.*

A celibate clergy, and still more closely the monastic orders, were identified with an extra-national organisation which might prove hostile to the interests or policy of the nation, and was essentially a world power though calling itself "spiritual." Professor Maitland puts this very strikingly. He says:—

> The mediæval Church was a State. Convenience may forbid us to call it a State very often, but we ought to do so from time to time, for we could frame no acceptable definition of a State which would not comprehend the Church. What has it not that a State should have? It has laws, lawgivers, law courts, lawyers. It uses physical force to compel men to obey its laws. It keeps prisons. In the thirteenth century, though with squeamish phrases, it pronounces sentence of death. It is no voluntary society. If people are not born into it, they are baptised into it when they cannot help themselves. If they attempt to leave it, they are guilty of the *crimen læsæ majestatis*, and are likely to be burnt. It is supported by involuntary contributions, by

[1] Constitutional History, vol. iii. p. 523. Cf. p. 373.

tithe and tax. That men believe it to have a supernatural origin does not alter the case. Kings have reigned by divine right, and republics have been founded in the name of God-given liberty.

He further remarks that the practical protests against the papal system, whether in the older statutes of præmunire and provisors, or in the legislation by Henry, "were made in the name and by the organs of the State, and not by the organs of the Church." Both the grievance and its remedy were strictly political.

When the Reforming Parliament, which lasted from November 3, 1529, to April 4, 1536, and in which the great constitutional statutes which have ever since regulated our ecclesiastical judicature were passed, Ferrufino wrote to Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara, that Parliament was being assembled "partly for the purpose of diminishing the authority of the clergy here."[1] In 1530 Henry was reported by Chapuys to have said he knew many who would not regret seeing the wings of the clergy clipped. "This allusion," says Chapuys, "was evidently directed against the Pope, although when I mentioned his name, the King suddenly interrupted me by saying, 'I am not speaking of the Pope.'"[2]

Parliament ask for a lay "remedy" against clerical "judges."

Mr Brewer says that the complaint of the Commons respecting the ecclesiastical courts in which the "Ordinaries delivered the party accused into secular hands *without remedy*" was drafted by Cromwell. They complained also of "the exactions done by the clergy in their courts"; and on the same day (January 15, 1532) the draft of a bill resembling in its provisions what was afterwards enacted as "The Submission Act" was corrected by Cromwell. It is noteworthy that the name of the Pope did not even occur in the complaint of the Commons, and only incidentally in the reply of the prelates. Archbishop Warham became so alarmed that he lodged a formal protest (February 24, 1532) against all Acts published or to be published "to the loss, prejudice, or restriction of the ecclesiastical power." But the Duke of Norfolk wrote four days later saying, "Notwithstanding the infinite clamours of the temporalty in Parliament against the misuse of the spiritual jurisdiction, the King will stop all evil effects if the Pope does not

[1] Venetian State Papers, vol. vi., Appendix.
[2] Spanish Despatches, p. 800.

handle him unkindly." Henry, indeed, kept back the "Reformation statutes" in the hope of gaining the Pope's sanction for his divorce, and even so late as April 15, 1533, still intimated that on the Pope's ratifying his marriage "he will revoke all." On July 11 the Pope gave sentence against the divorce, and Henry had at last reluctantly but finally broken with the Papacy.

A comparison of dates will show that though the Act 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12 sprang directly out of Henry's matrimonial needs, yet "the great Reformation statute" which constituted the Court of Delegates—viz., 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19—had been long delayed in the hope of a reconciliation.

Reform hated by the clergy.

Henry would have greatly preferred to keep friends with the Pope, and, like his predecessors, to have fleeced the English clergy by his aid. The recognition of the royal supremacy, says Bishop Stubbs, "was passed by an evasion for which Warham must answer. He proposed a form suggested by Lord Rochford [the brother of Anne Boleyn], and in putting it to the vote, added, 'Qui tacet consentire videtur.' The clergy, by an anticipation of Jesuitic subterfuge, and by a practical Irish bull, cried out, 'Itaque tacemus omnes.' By this levity the great Act was consummated."[1] But this "submission" did not affect the Pope's supremacy in spiritual matters, nor was it intended to do so. It expressly recognised it. The document is dated "in the seventh year of the pontificate of our most holy Lord (*Dominus*) and Father in Christ, Clement Pope," &c. It runs in the name of "William, Legate of the Apostolic See," and praises Henry because he had "defended the Church from the Lutherans with his pen"—viz., in a work maintaining the divine right of the Pope. Moreover, the qualification "so far as is permitted by the law of Christ" was intended by the clergy to retain this papal supremacy in spirituals. The "law of Christ," as they understood it, included the papal supremacy. Hence Archbishop Warham *twelve months later* protested against any statutes "in derogation of the Roman Pontiff or of the See Apostolic." The oath of fealty was still taken to the Pope by every English bishop. Appeals to Rome went on until March 30, 1534; and Henry did not invest

"Submission of clergy" had great political but no legal value.

[1] Lectures, p. 278.

either Lee or Gardiner with the temporalities of their respective sees until, on their petition, the Pope had granted bulls for their reinstitution. The Pope was still publicly prayed for in the place of honour.

Clergy did not desire to repudiate the Pope.

Even in 1534 Convocation could not be got to repudiate the papacy explicitly. They merely assented to a statement formulated for them by the Royal theologian that "the Roman Pontiff has not any greater jurisdiction conferred upon him by God *in Holy Scripture* than any other foreign bishop." The words "*In Sacra Scriptura*" are underlined in the original document, of which a lithographed facsimile can be seen in the last volume of Foxe's 'Acts and Monuments.' This, however, was merely a theological opinion ("se sentire"), and was not, as Mr Joyce represents it, a formal enactment by Convocation. Their belated action is explained by the fact that *the day before* Parliament had enacted the 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, which made it a crime punishable with imprisonment and præmunire to execute any of the decrees of the papal Court, or to prosecute any appeal to the Court of Rome. But the clergy were still free to hold that the Pope's supremacy was revealed by tradition, or derived from the authority of the Church. In no single instance did the anti-papal legislation of Henry originate with the clergy. Strype's misleading statement that Convocation had petitioned against the payment of annates has often been alleged on the other side; but the document was, as Mr Gairdner says,[1] merely the draft of a petition *in Parliament*, whereas the bishops and abbots voted and spoke against the measure. This brings out a feature of the Reformation which deserves especial attention—viz., that it was essentially a lay movement. "The importance of the new measures," says Mr Green,[2] "lay really in the action of Parliament. They were an explicit announcement that Church reform was now to be undertaken, not by the clergy, but by the people at large."

Church Reform a lay movement.

When that Parliament dealt by statute with heresy (25 Hen. VIII. c. 14) the measure was opposed by both Convocations; and when it recited the submission of the clergy in the preamble of the "Submission Act" (25 Hen. VIII. c. 19), it omitted altogether

[1] S. P., Hen. VIII., vol. v. p. 344.

[2] Hist. Eng., vol. ii. p. 148.

the equivocal wording, "so far as the law of Christ permits." Bonner, Gardiner, and the whole clergy had to take, and did take, the oath without any such ambiguous reservation. We learn from the Venetian State Papers (February 1, 1531) that the clergy had endeavoured to add the farther limitation, "et quatenus per leges canonicas liceat." So that the statute 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19 may be regarded as the reply of the laity. It forbade the clergy thenceforth to make any new canons, or even to attempt to enforce any old ones if in conflict with what the king's courts held to be the law or customs of England. In fact, but for a temporary proviso at the end, it repealed the existing canon law, while making provision for the subsequent enactment of a revised code to be afterwards drawn up by Royal Commissioners. The earlier Act, 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12 (1532), had permitted tithe suits to be appealed to the Arches, but no farther. But the Commons complained (March 1534) that the clergy were still "taking tithes and offerings contrary to justice, and being judges and parties in their own cause." As regards heresy, they complained also of their "calling them to courts *ex officio*, and not knowing their accusers, causing them to abjure, or else to burn them for pure malice." Hence it was from direct distrust and dissatisfaction with the "spiritual" judges that Parliament insisted on an appeal being given to the Crown from all and each of the Archbishops' courts.

For securing an appeal from the clerical courts to lay delegates.

In this they were sure of having Henry's sympathy, for so long before as A.D. 1515 he had rescued Dr Standish from the clutches of the Cardinal Archbishop of York and the Primate, with their entire clergy, who even threatened the king with the censures of Holy Church. Henry himself, however, decided that "spiritual suit" by saying: "By the will of God I am King of England, and by ancient custom have no superior save God. I intend to maintain the rights of my Crown as fully as any of my progenitors have done. You yourselves of the spiritualty act expressly against divers of the Decrees, and *interpret them according to your fancy*. I will never consent to your desires." [1] "There

[1] See Heywood's Preface to Bishop Gardiner's Oration (Longmans), p. 20.

is nothing," said he, on another occasion, "that the clergy might through dread and affection so well be deceived in as in things concerning the honour, dignity, power, liberty, *jurisdiction*, and riches of the Bishops and clergy; and some of them have of likelihood been deceived therein."[1]

Lay judges installed in "spiritual" courts.

In another work[2] I have examined one by one these Henrician ecclesiastical statutes, and shown that in each the claim of laymen to sit as judges, or to limit the action of the spiritual courts, is asserted, and their judgments upheld even in matters of abstract doctrine. But for the present sketch it may suffice to quote from the 37 Hen. VIII. c. 17, which, in despite of the Canon Law, enabled laymen to sit as ecclesiastical judges. After significantly referring to the king as being a layman, the Act goes on to say:—

> And albeit the said decrees, ordinances, and constitutions, by a statute made in the five-and-twentieth year of your most noble reign, be utterly abolished, . . . yet because the contrary thereunto is not used, nor put in practice by the archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, who *have no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical but by, under, and from your Royal Majesty*,"

married men and laymen might in future act as judges and registrars of these courts. It is under this very statute that all our present chancellors (save one) now sit.

Thus the great Reformation statute "for the submission of the clergy" effected a revolution which the mere reluctant assent of the Convocations had been powerless to effect. It gave an appeal to the King in Chancery in *all* suits of every kind whatever which could thenceforth be dealt with in any of the Archbishops' courts. And the whole of the agitation which led up to the passing of this fundamentally important Act (25 Hen. VIII. c. 19) shows that its object was to "remedy" the partiality and the class feeling which had characterised those discredited tribunals. But of late years the comparatively unimportant Act 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12 (which, considering its purpose, might be called the "Anne Boleyn Divorce Act") has been seized upon and magnified because its preamble speaks of the spiritualty as having tribunals of their own in which

Relative importance of 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12.

[1] Froude, vol. ii. p. 220. [2] Lay Judges in Church Courts, pp. 39-71.

alone certain classes of suits might be prosecuted. Some eager disputants have even claimed that it vindicates the right of Convocation alone to *legislate* for the Church! But the "spiritualty" mentioned in that Act are merely the archdeacons and other ordinaries with their officials and commissaries; and the "causes of the law divine" referred to were not matters of doctrine, but the purely "temporal" matters (as we now deem them) of wills, divorce, tithe-payments, and "obventions"—*i.e.*, money payments to the clergy. But the Act also states that the jurisdiction of the spiritualty devolved on them only by "the goodness of princes of this realm and by the laws and customs of the same"; the "spiritualty" being regarded simply as one of the "Estates" of that "realm," their jurisdiction being that of the "realm" (not of the Church), and created or modified by a series of statutes, of which several are referred to in the Act itself. No doubt it was true that in 1532 these suits could be dealt with only in the clerical courts: no lay judge might then presume to decide testamentary or tithe questions, which the clergy monopolised. But what statutes had conferred, statutes could take away. The "sufficiency of the English clergy" was strongly asserted, because, when that bill had been first drafted, Henry was intending to obtain "spiritual" sanction for his divorce by pitting his own nominee-bishops against the papal Curia. But he subsequently took a shorter cut to reach the same end, and had his sentence of divorce (or rather of nullity of marriage) from the Archbishop sitting as a Court (not of appeal, but) of first instance at Dunstable. In theory, an appeal to one "House" of one of the Convocations was permitted by the Act; but this was never once acted upon, and was abolished the year after by the 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, and no such appeal is now legal.[1] Appeals in any of the three classes of suits named could not be carried to the Throne under the earlier Act; but this restriction was abolished by the 25 Hen. VIII. c. 19, which overruled and superseded the 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12, in the points most insisted on

[1] The unanimous decisions to this effect of all the judges in the Courts of Q.B., C.P., and Exchequer are given in Stephens' 'Notes on the Common Prayer,' pp. 1382-1419.

by modern controversialists. Lord Halifax has suggested that the fact of the *Reformatio legum* proposing to give an appeal to "three or four bishops to be appointed by the Crown" is proof that only clergymen might act in Chancery as the King's delegates. But the *Reformatio* really dates from the reign of Edward VI.,[1] Peter Martyr being one of its compilers; and it failed to gain acceptance for reasons which King Edward tersely stated in his Journal: "Because those Bishops who should execute it, some for papistry, some for ignorance, some for age, some for their ill name, some for all these, are men unable to execute discipline."[2] Or, as Fuller graphically puts it, "Under the fair rind of Protestant profession they had the rotten core of Romish superstition." Burnet says, "The pretence of opposing it was that the greatest part of the bishops and clergy were still papists at heart; so that if power were put into such men's hands it was reasonable to expect that they would employ it chiefly against those who favoured the Reformation."[3] Be that as it may, Lord Halifax is not entitled to assume that a rejected scheme which Parliament repeatedly refused to adopt (alike under Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth) can be taken as proof of what Parliament intended to be the composition of a court designed to "remedy" the grievances of the laity occasioned by the alleged judicial unfairness or "malice" of ecclesiastics.

Reformatio legum not evidence of law.

The ecclesiastical reforms which Henry effected were that the clergy could no longer molest the laity by enforcing against them a foreign code of law: they could no longer make new canons without licence from the Crown: no sentence given by them could be exempt from an appeal, *on the merits*, to the Crown of England: the system of laws which they had long administered was deprived of its authority by destroying the Pope's supremacy, on which that authority entirely depended. The teaching of canon law was forbidden by royal edict at both Universities. Even discipline was for the future regulated rather by parlia-

Summary of Henry's reforms.

[1] Original Letters, p. 503; Gorham, Reformation Gleanings, p. 286. The 27 Hen. VIII. c. 15 testifies that no Commissioners were ever appointed under the older Act.

[2] Burnet, Hist. Ref., vol. ii. ii. p. 102.

[3] Ibid., i. p. 198.

Educational value of Henry's reforms.

mentary statutes than by the surviving customs which had originated in canon law in former times. Above all, the principle underlying all parliamentary action in such subject-matter,—like the survivals of Lollardy, the schism of the papacy, the disputes going on in every village as to the rival claims of contending parties, the vacillations between the teachings of "the King's Book" and "the Bishop's Book," and the permission given, however grudgingly, to read the English Bible placed in the parish churches,—elicited free thought, educated the minds of men, and opened the flood-gates for that "heresy" which Henry detested quite as much as his most bigoted prelates.

Bishop Hooper and others described Henry's standpoint as "popery without the Pope." Henry rejected the overtures of the Lutheran envoys, who sought to induce him to place himself at the head of a Protestant league; for he never was a Protestant. Under the bloody Act of the Six Articles, which by his personal interference he forced through Parliament, he put to death about a hundred persons who had dared to deny Transubstantiation. His breach with the Pope was not doctrinal; neither king nor nation was then Protestant. The Reformation of religion dates *not* from Henry VIII. but from Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth. Archbishop Bramhall says:—

> The many Acts which passed in the reign of Henry VIII. declaring the independence of the Church of England were passed by Roman Catholics, when there was no thought of any Reformation. If it was this separation from Rome which constituted a schism, then the authors of it, Heath and Bonner, Tunstall and Gardiner, Stokesly and Thirlby, were the schismatics. The separation was made to our hands. It was not till Edward's days that the Church of England embraced the doctrines of the Reformation.

These Roman Catholic "schismatics" were indeed the true and legitimate ancestors of our modern "Ritualists," who, like them, combine Romish beliefs and worship with disobedience to the Pope. Like them, too, their future submission to the papacy was but a question of time.

Bishop Lloyd, famous as the teacher of Dr Pusey, in his preface to the 'Formularies of Faith put forth by Henry VIII.,' justly observes:—

It is needless to observe that these documents cannot pretend to any authority in the present day. Nothing antecedent to the reign of Edward VI. has any title to that character. It was then only that the errors of popery were formally renounced, and the pure doctrines of Protestantism authoritatively established in this kingdom.

Not the Pope but the Hierarchy the object of Henry's attack.

Another proof, if proof were needed, that the legislation of Henry was directed against the claims of his own clergy, is found in the passing of the Act 25 Hen. VIII. c. 20. An earlier Act (23 Hen. VIII. c. 20) had provided against any interference by the Pope with the election or installation of English bishops. But now a further provision was made that if a dean and chapter refused to elect the person nominated to them by the king, the appointment should take place all the same by letters patent, and that the penalties of præmunire should befall any archbishop or bishop or other official who neglected to consecrate and invest the king's nominee. That law remains in force to the present day, and its object clearly was to break down the opposition of the national clergy by insisting on their obedience to the civil ruler. Whether that course was ideally perfect or not may be matter of debate; but the fact remains that "the Reformation Settlement," as matter of fact, did take precisely that form.

His politico-ecclesiastical reforms remain substantially unchanged.

Of course, under Mary, the royal supremacy succumbed to the papal, though the change had to be made solely by the "Erastian" authority of the Crown and Parliament. But Elizabeth's very first Act repealed the Marian statutes and restored the Crown to all its prerogatives, adding explicitly the correction of "schisms" to the other "spiritual" matters dealt with by Henry's Parliament. The change of title from "Supreme Head" to "Supreme Governour" was in excellent taste, but it involved no iota of principle. Whatever the Supreme Head could do by law, that the Supreme Governour might lawfully do and actually did. The law thenceforward administered and recognised in our English ecclesiastical courts was mainly statute law, as Sir James Parker Deane, the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury, pointed out at the Folkestone Church Congress in 1892: the bishops' courts became "the king's ecclesiastical courts"; and the customary survivals of bygone constitutions were retained only

as parts of "the king's ecclesiastical laws,"—a phrase which, as Professor Maitland points out, was absolutely unknown to Lyndwood, to whom such a thought would have been abhorrent, or, rather, unintelligible.

On the continuity of this principle Lord Selborne, in his 'Defence of the Church of England against Disestablishment,' p. 42, has said:—

> There was very little, if any, difference in principle between the appeal to the "King in Chancery," given by the Act of 1533, and the old custom of the Church of England before the allowance of appeals to Rome, as declared by the eighth article of the Constitutions of Clarendon. The procedure, also, under that statute, was (in form as well as substance) very nearly identical with that which had prevailed before the Reformation as to "Free Chapels" exempt from ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction; which were always subject to visitation by the King's Chancellor (personally or by commissary), with an appeal to the King by Commission of Review. It is needless to add, that there cannot possibly be any difference in principle between an appeal to the King in Chancery given by statute in A.D. 1533, and an appeal to the King in Council given by statute in A.D. 1832: the latter may, or may not, be a better court than the former; but there cannot be any difference in principle.

THE DOCTRINAL REFORMATION.

Henry's zeal in stamping out heresy was doubtless due in part to the fear lest he might himself be suspected of heresy, seeing that he was regarded throughout western Christendom as being already in schism. His "Six Articles Act" was immediately followed by the "resignation" and imprisonment of Bishops Shaxton and Latimer, who had dared to oppose the passing of his favourite measure. Poor Shaxton was indicted under the Act and compelled to recant, and the terms of that recantation are deeply interesting as fixing precisely the officially recognised belief of the Church of England on the very eve of its reformation. His recantation is duly entered in Bonner's register:—

Medieval "Catholicism."

Articles acknowledged by Shaxton, late Bishop of Sarum.—i. Almighty God by the power of His word, pronounced by the priest at Mass in conse-

cration, turneth the bread and wine into the NATURAL body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ: so that after the consecration there remaineth no substance of bread and wine, but only the *substance* of Christ, God and Man.

ii. The said blessed Sacrament, being once consecrate, is and remaineth still the very body and blood of our Saviour Christ, though it be reserved and not presently distributed.

iii. The same blessed Sacrament, being consecrate, is and *ought to be worshipped and adored with godly honour wheresoever it is*, forasmuch as it is the body of Christ inseparably united to the Deity.

iv. The Church, by the ministration of the priest, offereth daily at the Mass, for a sacrifice to Almighty God, the self-same body and blood of our Saviour Christ, under the form of bread and wine, in the remembrance of Christ's death and passion.

v. The same body and blood which is offered in the Mass is the very propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of the world; forasmuch as it is the self-same *in substance* which was offered upon the cross for our redemption; and the oblation or action of the priest is also a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving unto God for His benefits, and not the satisfaction for the sins of the world, for that is only to be attributed to Christ's passion.

vi. The said oblation, or sacrifice, so by the priest offered in the Mass, is available and profitable both for the quick and the dead, although it lieth not in the power of man to limit how much, or in what measure, the same doth avail.[1]

This language was carefully chosen with reference to the current controversies stirred up by Luther. Thus the second article deals directly with the Lutheran belief that sacraments cease to be sacraments *extra usum*—outside, *i.e.*, the sacramental action itself. Again, the closing words of the fifth article are clearly designed to repel an obscure calumny (for which, indeed, there was no sufficient ground) which the Confession of Augsburg had mistakenly imputed to Aquinas, but of which neither he nor the Roman Church had ever been guilty.[2]

On the other hand, divine honour is directed to be paid to the sacrament itself (Art. iii.); and a twofold "offering"[3] seems to be

[1] Burnet, Hist. Ref., vol. i. ii. p. 400.

[2] For the bearing of this on the meaning of Art. xxxi., see my 'Prayer-Book Articles and Homilies,' p. 299; and Mr Dimock's 'Dangerous Deceits,' published by Elliot Stock.

[3] "Offering" and "oblation" are used in two very distinct senses: sometimes for the *thing* offered (*oblatum*), sometimes for the act of offering

recognised, one of these "offerings" being that of the "*Substance*" alleged to have been produced by consecration; the other, the action of the priest in praise and thanksgiving—*i.e.*, in the merely human Liturgy (Art. v.) It is impossible to say which of these was intended to be described in Art. vi. as the "said oblation." But the technical word "substance" employed in the first and fifth articles gives the key to the whole mystification. It is simply an application of verbal logic to ideas due solely to bad metaphysics.

Bad philosophy the basis of medieval theology.

The Realistic philosophy had been reasoned out by Aquinas, and was generally adopted in this connection, so that "grace" was held to be the substance of Christ's natural body,[1] which by the resurrection had lost all its known properties, or acquired new ones, so as to be capable of existing "under the form" (*i.e.*, with the sensible properties) of other material things. When matter had thus been "spiritualised" by becoming impalpable and attenuated, it was supposed capable of being invisibly transmitted within pieces of consecrated matter ("sacraments") which had been duly blessed by persons in episcopal orders. Thus "spiritual presence" was interpreted to mean, not a presence to men's spiritual nature, but the spirit-*like* presence of an organised human body! On this view, transubstantiation presented no special difficulties, since it merely implied that an invisible and unknowable "substance" had been unascertainably altered into another "substance" equally unknowable. Pantheism would seem the natural

(*oblatio*). In Art. xxxi. the word is used for that "unique" *action* which was "finished upon the cross."

[1] "The body and blood of Christ are the true recuperative Substance which is represented in the New Testament by the word 'Grace.'"—Blunt's 'Annotated Prayer-Book,' p. 158. Compare Cobb's 'Kiss of Peace,' p. 408. This "inward part, or Thing-signified," reaches the soul *viâ* the body; by contact with the skin in Baptism; by being swallowed in the Supper. Hence the 'People's Hymnal' says of Judas Iscariot:—

> "Thou hast stretched these hands for silver
> That had held immortal food,
> With these lips that late had tasted
> Of the Body and the Blood."
>
> —Hymn 187.

See G. H. Forbes' 'Christian Sacrifice,' pp. 183, 293.

outcome of such a theory, since no one could say that the "substance" of any one thing could be conceived of as differing in any known respect from that of any other. Moreover, the proof of the Incarnation, death, and resurrection of our Lord, and, indeed, of all the facts in the Gospels, alike rest on that very evidence of the senses which this theory held to be worthless and misleading. Such were some of the difficulties which necessarily occurred to men's minds when bidden to disbelieve the combined evidence of their own senses, seeing that what looked like bread, smelt like bread, tasted like bread, weighed like bread, and felt like bread, was no longer bread at all, but a different "substance," though retaining all the distinctive characteristics of "bread."

In the current language of the schools the word "real" was held to relate to the "thing" itself (*res*), meaning by "thing" an ideal "think" postulated by the word "substance."[1] Thus Scholasticism was simply the medieval form of Rationalism. Our reformers were naturally hampered by their own past training in the Realistic philosophy; for Cranmer wrote ten years before Francis Bacon was born. Peter Martyr, however, who was made Professor of Divinity at Oxford in the first year of King Edward VI., refused to argue the question unless he should manage the disputation "only in Scripture terms, and not in terms of the schools." Dean Liddell shrewdly observes that herein

he showed his wisdom; for when the Reforming theologians undertook this latter task, they were at a disadvantage. There is a notable instance of this in the case of Lambert. This man was to hold a disputation on this very subject in the presence of Henry VIII.; and he replied not unsuccessfully to his objectors, till Stokesley, Bishop of London, "a learned scholastic divine," assailed him with the argument "that in nature we see one Substance changed into another, yet the Accidents remain; so when water is boiled till it evaporates into air, one Substance is changed into another, and moisture, that was the Accident, remains." The sophism seems to have silenced poor Lambert, who "submitted himself to the King's clemency," and was burnt in Smithfield with circumstances of great barbarity.[2]

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[1] Compare p. 69 above.

[2] Sermon before the University, on "There am I in the midst of them," 1867. Compare Burnet, Hist. Ref., ed. Pocock, vol. i. p. 404; vol. ii. p. 195. Bishop Thirlwall has pointed out the verbal juggle: for "if a substance and

Nothing is more marked in the dawn of the Reformation than the increasing importance attached to the testimony of Scripture as the rule of faith. It was this which led to the downfall of the traditions of the "schools." Cranmer was a diligent student of Scripture, and his immense industry and wide reading have never been duly realised till of late years, when Mr Burbidge succeeded in tracing a large number of Cranmer's books bearing throughout proofs of his close personal study. Archbishop Benson, too, has testified that Cranmer would have been eminent as a schoolman had he not been more eminent as a Reformer.

English Reformers never adopted Lutheran doctrine of Sacraments.

Even his enemies admit his unrivalled power of clothing the language of devotion in the stateliest, simplest words of his mother tongue. To him more than to any (or even every) other man we owe our 'Common Prayer.' He had been studying for years the Lutheran movement, and the large extent to which our Thirty-nine Articles and Baptismal and other Offices were framed under his guidance on Lutheran models has been repeatedly pointed out.[1] The year of Shaxton's recantation was also the date of Cranmer's conversion;[2] but with his natural imitativeness and caution, Cranmer passed through the twilight stage of a belief in Consubstantiation before he reached the distinctive Anglican position. The "Real" presence, as above defined, did not necessarily involve Transubstantiation; for the coexistence of two (or twenty) "substances" was as easy to imagine as "turn-kind," and, moreover, it involved no such direct repudiation of the evidence of the senses. All writers and speakers at that period were accustomed to distinguish between these two perfectly separable beliefs. And the distinctive characteristic of the English Reformation Settlement was, that it repudiated *equally and alike* the "Real" presence (as above defined) and the Roman doctrine.

its accidents are correlatives, it can be no more possible for the accidents to exist without the substance than the parts without their whole" (Charge, 1869). The ambiguity in the word "substance" was also pointed out by Dr Salmon in his very able sermon at Trinity College, which ought to be reprinted. See Gregory Nyssen, lib. 12 c. Eunom. p. 750 D.

[1] See Laurence's 'Bampton Lectures' and Jacob's 'Lutheran Movement in England.'

[2] Cranmer's Works, P.S., vol. ii. p. 218.

Cranmer says of himself that "not long before I wrote the said Catechism [published in 1548] I was in that error of the Real presence, as I was many years past in divers *other* errors, as of Transubstantiation."[1] Latimer dates his conversion 1547, saying, "I was a papist; for I never could perceive how Luther could defend his opinion without Transubstantiation."[2]

Ridley admitted to his Roman Catholic friends that "we are more nigh an agreement here in England than the opinion of Melanchthon to you: for *in this point we all agree here*,[3] that there is in the sacrament but one material substance, and Melanchthon, as I ween, saith there are two." Logically the Romanists had the advantage over Luther in that the word "IS" cannot be *literally* interpreted to mean "contains," or "includes," or "coexists with," or "conveys." Ridley saw that the whole doctrine of the Mass hung upon this very point—viz., the so-called "Real" presence of a deified "Substance" under the form of bread.

> For if it be Christ's own natural body, born of the Virgin, then assuredly (seeing that *all learned men in England, so far as I know, both New and Old, grant that there be but one Substance*), then I say they must needs grant Transubstantiation; that is a change of the Substance of the bread into the Substance of Christ's body. Then also they must needs grant the carnal and corporal presence of Christ's body. Then must the sacrament be adored with the honour due to Christ Himself, for the unity of the two natures in one Person. Then if the priest doth offer the sacrament, he doth offer indeed Christ Himself. And finally, the murderer, the adulterer, or wicked man receiving the sacrament, must needs then receive also the natural Substance of Christ's own blessed body, both flesh and blood.[4]

Test invented to exclude "objective" presence.

On comparing the above passage with Shaxton's recantation, it will be seen that the doctrine of the reception by the wicked has been added. In Elizabeth's time this took the shape of an additional article (the xxixth) framed by Archbishop Parker to serve as a test in order to exclude Lutherans from the ministry of the Church of England. But in the second year of King Edward VI. —*i.e.*, 1548—the same doctrine was avowedly adopted by all the

[1] Works, vol. i. p. 374. [2] Latimer's Remains, p. 486.
[3] Foxe, vol. vi. p. 436.
[4] Brief Declaration of the Lord's Supper, ed. Moule, p. 107.

Reforming bishops in the public Debate held with the Roman Catholic prelates in presence of both Houses of Parliament. This remarkable Debate settles conclusively what was the Anglican standpoint. Both parties agreed that in the new book (the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI.) the "Real presence" and the doctrine of Transubstantiation were (both alike) rejected, that the "Oblation" had been "taken out," and the reception by the wicked was made to serve as a dividing line, precisely as in our present Article xxix. When we remember that Bishop Fox of Hereford and Dr Barnes had both been Lutherans, and that Cranmer had within little more than a twelvemonth previously himself held the Lutheran view, it is remarkable that, at the very outset of the Reformation, the Lutheran teaching as to the Sacrament should have been so completely abandoned. I have published, through Messrs J. F. Shaw & Co., a careful reprint of this most important Debate (price 6d.), and also the 'Canon of the Mass with the Communion Office of the First Prayer-Book' printed side by side (price 4d.) Both these documents are within the reach of every one, and deserve to be studied by all who care to know what the English Reformation of doctrine actually consisted in.

Failings of first Prayer-Book.

It may be wondered, not unreasonably, why, if the Lutheran doctrine were thus repudiated during the Great Debate of 1548, the First Prayer-Book should have retained several ambiguous expressions as to Christ's being present "IN those holy mysteries." Cranmer explained in a well-known passage[1] that by the words "Mystery" or "Sacrament" he meant the entire sacramental *action* ("the ministration and receiving"), and not the mere outside "creatures of bread and wine," even though consecrated to their heavenly use.

But it must also be borne in mind that it was only with difficulty that he could get a Protestant service-book substituted for the missal by a Parliament so divided as England could then furnish. A majority of the bishops were then hostile, and had Gardiner been present to take part in the Debate, it is even possible that the book might after all have been rejected. In several

[1] Answer to Gardiner, Preface, p. 3, and p. 232, line 5.

respects we know the First Prayer-Book fell short of the wishes and views of its own promoters. Their speeches prove that they had adopted completely the advanced position of the "Reformed" Churches as early as 1548, and before either Bucer or Alasco[1] could possibly have prejudiced Cranmer's mind, so little truth is there in the flippant sneer that our religion was "made in Germany." This, too, explains the haste with which a revision of the book was set about at the earliest possible moment, so soon as the hostile bishops could be got rid of. I have shown elsewhere[2] that every one of the changes made from the First Prayer-Book in 1552 was occasioned by the efforts of Gardiner and his co-religionists to put on the language of the First Prayer-Book a meaning consistent with a so-called "real" or "objective" presence within the elements.

In every one of those instances, Cranmer, while maintaining that the words were capable of an innocent meaning, was careful to remove what had proved a stumbling-block to the weaker brethren. One real blot disfigured the First Prayer-Book—viz., that (like the Roman Missal) it placed the Invocation before the words of Institution, thus departing (doubtless from sheer ignorance) from every one of the ancient Liturgies, and thereby forfeiting their invaluable testimony against the Roman theory—viz., that "Hoc est corpus" is the effective cause of the alleged miraculous "change."

Meaning of "Real" presence.

In concentrating our attention on this metaphysical fog as to "substance," out of which grew all the practical abuses of the Mass, we are but following the teaching of history. The Reformation in England did turn precisely on a rejection of this theory of a "real" presence, or identification of the "sign" with the "thing signified." The word "presence" itself, by the way, is both unscriptural and misleading, for, when predicated of an organic human body, it *necessarily* means residence in space. Hence the

[1] Bucer did not arrive in England till April 23, 1549, and Alasco, who arrived on September 21, 1548, found Cranmer absent from home, and was himself ill in bed prior to the "Great Debate."

[2] Prayer-Book Articles and Homilies, pp. 16-34 (Elliot Stock).

Edwardine reformers embodied in their 29th (our 28th) Article of religion an express verbal repudiation of the "real presence," and the word "presence" has never since regained any authoritative position in any of our formularies. On the contrary, the Declaration on Kneeling still asserts that the body which is in Heaven is "not *here*." Cranmer, in the preface to his immortal work on the Lord's Supper (p. 6), justly said :—

> But what availeth it to take away beads, pardons, pilgrimages, and such other like popery, so long as the two chief roots remain unpulled up? whereof, so long as they remain, will spring again all former impediments of the Lord's harvest, and corruptions of His flock. The rest is but branches and leaves, the cutting away whereof is but like topping and lopping of a tree, or cutting down of weeds, leaving the body and the roots in the ground ; but the very body of the tree, or rather the roots of the weeds, is the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, of the *real presence* of Christ flesh and blood in the sacrament of the altar (as they call it), and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ made by the priest, for the salvation of the quick and dead. Which roots if they be suffered to grow in the Lord's vineyard, they will overspread all the ground again with the old errors and superstitions.

This prophecy, alas! is receiving daily fulfilment before our eyes. Another illustration of the designed rejection of the Lutheran view is furnished by the little-known tract on the "Sacrament of Thanksgiving" which on December 1, 1548, was placed in the hands of the Lord Protector and others who were about to take part in the Great Parliamentary Debate before mentioned. Written by Peter Martyr, and translated (probably) by Somerset's chaplain, it embodies tersely the position intended to be taken up by the advocates of the new Prayer-Book, and the summary of its conclusions is thus given by Dr Gasquet, the learned Benedictine to whose highly original and most interesting work, 'Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer,' all English Churchmen owe a debt of gratitude. The "conclusions" are as follows :—

Rejected from the very first in England.

(1) "Christ is in the Holy Supper to them that do come to His table, and He doth verily feed the faithful with His body and blood." (2) There is no transubstantiation. (3) There is no intermixture of the natures or substances of bread and wine and body and blood. (4) But they are so united

that as often as the one is *faithfully* received the other also is. (5) "The presence of Christ . . . doth belong more nighly to the receivers than the tokens"—that is, "of those receivers that do *rightly and faithfully* come to the communion." (6) "The presence of Christ . . . is not at any time but in the *use* of the Supper." (7) Only the good receive "the body and blood," the wicked "receive nothing but the tokens of bread and wine." (8) When the sacrament is received "the faithful" ought to worship "in their mind Christ Himself and not the tokens." (9) "The residue of this sacrament, after the communion is done, ought not to be kept, as we see it used now in popish churches."

The same thought was expressed by Ridley himself during the Debate. Heath had asked him "Whether the receiver taketh any *substance* or not?" to which Ridley responded: "The carnal substance sitteth on the right hand of the Father. After this understanding of the presence He is not in the sacrament. He is *absent*, for He saith He will leave the world. And in another sense (He saith) He will be with us until the end of the world. Expounded thus by St Austen, 'He goeth away after a certain sort and is with us still after a certain sort.' The manhood is ever in heaven: His divinity is everywhere present. When He was here He was *circumscriptivè* in one place as touching His natural body. *Secundum ineffabilem gratiam.* I will be with you till the consummation. Christ sits in heaven, and is present in the Sacrament *by His working.*"[1]

Cranmer, in the same Debate, said:—

Our faith is not to believe Him to be IN the bread and wine, but that He is in heaven: this is proved by Scripture and Doctors till the Bishop of Rome's usurped power came in. Then no man drinketh Christ or eateth Him, except he dwell in Christ and Christ in him.

Again—

I believe that Christ is eaten with the heart. The eating with our mouth cannot give us life. Only good men eat Christ's body. Eating with the mouth giveth nothing to the man, nor the body being *in* the bread.[2] The change is inward, *not in the bread*, but in the receiver. To have Christ present "really" *here*, when I may receive Him in faith, is not available to do me good (p. 53).

[1] Great Debate, p. 38.

[2] Ibid., pp. 27, 39.

Idolatry and Sin-offerings founded on the "Real" presence.

It would of course be easy to supplement these statements from the later writings of both Cranmer and Ridley; but nothing could add to the clearness of these earlier utterances, which were echoed by their colleagues during the public Debate in presence of their enemies. The denial of an objective presence carried with it a complete change both in the forms of divine worship and in the nature of men's conceptions of the Gospel. If it were true that Christ was reproduced as the supreme object of worship in given pieces of matter at fixed hours, and being there and then "handled upon the altar" was offered up to the Father "for the quick and dead to have remission of pain or guilt" in purgatory or elsewhere, it follows that the miracle thus imagined must transcend even that of the Incarnation. If the frequently renewed offering of Christ as a victim is still needed for the application[1] of the benefit of the Cross, it follows that men's hopes will be centred on the mass-offering rather than upon Calvary. Indeed both the Incarnation and the Crucifixion become foreshortened, as it were, into a mere foreground to the more august drama enacted "day by day continually" as each priest stands "offering oftentimes the same sacrifice for sins." It makes no difference either to the practical result or to the attitude of men's minds or bodies, whether the mass-offering is conceived to depend upon Calvary for its wonder-working potency or not. For all purposes of practical religion the Deified wafer is itself the living God toward which all the worshippers' love, gratitude, and hope are directed. The necessary result, therefore, of the Reformers' rejection of the "Real" presence was that they held such worship of the Wafer to be strictly idolatrous, and the sin-offering of the Mass to be a "blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit." Thus an easy test of "heresy" was afforded by the behaviour of the worshipper when the "Host" was elevated. A common charge against such suspects was, "For not looking up to the Elevation;" "some for

[1] Moreover, "application" is the business of a sacrament—*i.e.*, God's gift to man; whereas a sacrifice is man's gift to God, its "application" is Godward, not man-ward, as Cranmer's friend, Archbishop Herman, pointed out. See Bishop Thirlwall's Charge, 1867, p. 145, and Dugdale's 'Life of Geste,' p. 97.

turning their heads away;" and, one, Christopher Erles, "because he did no reverence unto the sacrament coming to the church, and for looking upon his book at the time of the Elevation."[1]

John Myrc's 'Instructions for Parish Priests'[2] illustrates this wafer-worship as practised by our ancestors. He sings:—

"Teach them also, I thee pray,
That when they walken in the way
And see the priest a-gayn him coming
God's body with him bearing,
Then with great devotione
Teach them there to kneel a-down;
Fair nor foul, spare they nought
To worship Him who all hath wrought
For glad may that man be
That *once in the day* may Him see:
For so mickle good doeth that sight
(As St Austen teacheth aright)
That *that day thou seest* God's body
These benefits thou shalt have securely,"—

and goes on to promise the devotee of the wafer that on that day he shall not lack food, shall be forgiven idle words and oaths, and shall not fall by sudden death, nor become blind.

To the minds of our English Reformers the Mass was a pagan perversion of the Evangelical sacrament, which had been materialised and converted into an idol and a charm—a sort of "spiritual" dynamo charged with latent deity indeed, but making no appeal to the understanding, heart, character, or conscience, but solely to that dread and awe which magical incantations and sorceries might equally inspire. The craving for priestly absolutions and for propitiatory offerings to be directed by the intention of the priest (for a valuable consideration) to the benefit (somehow) of the sinner was the one dominant idea. Hence lay communions had wellnigh ceased. It was not "fellowship" with a God who is a Spirit and

"Continuity" of Church does not involve continuity of teaching.

[1] Foxe, Acts and Mon., vol. v. pp. 444, 445, 454.

[2] Early English Text Society, p. 10. The Synod of Oxford, 1222 (to which Archbishop Benson referred for the use of altar-lights), bade "the laity be frequently admonished that wheresoever they see the Body of the Lord brought, they immediately kneel down *as to their Creator and Redeemer*" (Wilkins, vol. i. p. 594).

who seeks for worshippers who worship Him in that part of their nature which is akin to His own, but rather the slavish "coming to heel" of one who dreads his tyrant and trusts to mediators of all ranks to propitiate His anger by acts done on his behalf by others outside himself. Hence men crowded to the churches to "see their Maker once a-day" (the devout King Henry himself went oftener), to "hear" mass, and so to get the good of the "stupendous," "ineffable," "mysterious," "mystical," and altogether imaginary "offering" afresh by human hands of the divine victim, but hearing no syllable of teaching, and often unable to read for themselves a single text of Scripture. Hence the strong language of disgust and reprobation with which, not one but *all*, the English Reformers spoke of "the Mass." It is true that in the First Prayer-Book the "Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion" is described as "commonly called the Mass"; but this was merely because the ignorant multitude would have imagined otherwise that some entirely new religion was being offered to them. Latimer tells us that even a bishop was shocked at the phrase "Lord's Supper," and asked, "What new term is that?" But it should be noted that "commonly called," like the *vulgo dicebatur* of Article xxxi., was never used except as a term of criticism or censure. "Commonly called," in each instance, meant ignorantly and improperly called. The Creed is certainly *not* by "Athanasius," nor "that which is commonly called the Apostles' Crede" by the Twelve;[1] the birthday of Christ is wrongly described as His "Mass." The "purification of Mary" is not, whereas the "Presentation of Christ" is, a matter which concerns all Christians. That is why the older names were supplanted in the newly authorised terminology of the First Prayer-Book. A man known through an entire village as "the drunkard" might be introduced at a temperance meeting after his reformation as "commonly called the drunkard," though that appellation was, even then, abhorrent to himself. But the difference between the things, called respectively "the Mass" and the "Holy Communion," was vital; so much so that the advocates of the former,

"Commonly called."

[1] See Bishop Dowden's Workmanship of the Prayer-Book, p. 113, cf. p. 96.

so long as they had the power, burned the friends of the latter to death. Bishop Gardiner was deprived because he would not subscribe the statement that "the Mass was full of abuses and had very few things of Christ's institution, and therefore was *justly taken away by the statutes and laws of the realm*, and the Communion which is placed *instead thereof* is very Godly and agreeable to the Scriptures."[1] Ridley, before his martyrdom, said of the see of London: "Why dost thou set up again many altars of idolatry, which by the Word of God were justly taken away? Oh, why hast thou overthrown the Lord's table? Why dost thou daily delude the people, masking in thy masses, in the stead of the Lord's most holy supper?"[2] No Englishmen in those days even wished to bridge over the great gulf fixed. The Papists, when forced to come to church, made a mock at the "Christmas game," as they called the Reformed service; while their priests, under Mary, denounced the Communion Office as "the abominable late Communion" (Bishop Goldwell), "the most devilish thing that ever was devised" (Parson of Grapenhall); "the Schismatical service or damnable Communion now used" (Vaux, Warden of Manchester); or as the "Schismatical book" called the "Communion book" in the language of Mary's Convocation. On the other hand, the Reformers described the existing Mass as "idolatrous," "blasphemous," and "damnable." The Romish incumbents, who under Elizabeth long retained their livings, used to celebrate Mass privately at home with the discontented "faithful," or sometimes brought to church consecrated wafers for the genuine Romanists, while the rest of the parish had the desecrated "Communion bread" dealt out to them by irreverent hands.[3] On both sides alike there was agreement that the "old religion" and the "new"[4] were distinguished by this wide cleavage of doctrine respecting the sacrament. Ridley said:—

The "Mass" abhorred and rejected.

If ye be desirous to know what things do offend me in the Mass, . . .

[1] Dasent's Acts of Privy Council, vol. iii. p. 74.
[2] Ridley's works, ed. Parker Soc., p. 409.
[3] See MacColl's Caricature of Reformation (Thynne), pp. 16, 17.
[4] Cranmer's Letters, p. 450.

and seem to repugn most manifestly against God's word, they be these. The strange tongue: the want of showing of the Lord's death: the *breaking the Lord's commandment of having a Communion:* the sacrament is not communicated to all under both kinds, according to the word of the Lord: the sign is worshipped servilely for the Thing-signified: Christ's passion is injured, forasmuch as this Mass sacrifice is affirmed to remain for the purging of sins.[1]

This was written while Ridley was waiting his turn to be burned: yet Mr G. W. Russell opines that he thought "Communion" and Mass the same thing! Bishop Geste (who is sometimes inaccurately described as the author of Article xxviii.), wrote in 1548 ("the second year of King Edward VI."):—

The *true Mass*, otherwise named the Communion, which cannot be so highly esteemed and so often frequented as of necessity it ought, without the *Priest-Mass* be hated and detested, for both it and the Communion cannot be jointly regarded. Whoso loveth the one must needs hate the other, for why, they be *mere contraries.*[2]

The present Archbishop of Canterbury in his recent Charge happily summed up the whole Reformation Settlement of doctrine in this matter by saying, "The effect of the prayer of consecration is to attach to the elements NOT A PRESENCE, but a promise." A "sacramental presence" means, as Jeremy Taylor said, not "real being in a *place*, but relation to a person:" and, in the case of an Omnipresent Being, it can have no other possible meaning. The common phrase "Deo præsente" well illustrates this usage.

AURICULAR CONFESSION.

"The whip with six strings."

The Six Articles Act punished with imprisonment and loss of goods any "holding opinions contrary" to the practice of auricular confession; death by burning being the penalty of a second offence.[3] By English canon law the man who did not confess at Easter was "forbidden entrance into the church while he is alive, and deprived of Christian burial when dead."[4] These laws re-

[1] Works, p. 119. [2] Dugdale's Life of Geste, p. 140.
[3] Foxe, Acts and Mon., vol. v. p. 263.
[4] Sudbury's Constitutions, in Lyndwood, p. 343.

mained in full force till the close of the "first year of King Edward VI." So late as April 1547 a royal commission issued to Bonner under this bloody statute, and many persons were indicted or imprisoned. Even in November 1547 Canterbury Convocation dared not discuss a revision of the Service-book until the Act had been repealed.[1] Anne Askew and three other persons had been burned only the year before; and William Hastlen, Dr Harley (afterwards Bishop of Hereford), and John Hume were among the prisoners committed during 1547. Thomas Hobbe (another of them) died in prison.[2] The "continuity of doctrine" remained unbroken during the first year of Edward VI.

No doctrinal reform in first year of Edward VI.

But one reform of great importance broke that "continuity." The very first statute of Edward VI. required the cup to be restored by the clergy to the Church, and that incumbents should in future exhort their congregations "to the end that every man may try and examine *his own* conscience before he shall receive the same"; also that "the said minister shall not without a lawful cause deny the same to any person that will devoutly and humbly desire it; any law, statute, ordinance, or custom contrary thereunto in anywise notwithstanding." The bill was read in the Lords on November 26, and did not come before Convocation till four days later. Eleven bishops absented themselves, and five voted against the bill in Parliament. On December 24, 1547, the Six Articles Act and all the Heresy Acts, as well as the shameful Proclamation Act, were repealed absolutely, so that the Reformers were at last unmuzzled, and men began to speak freely once more. The "white terror" was at an end. From that time auricular confession ceased to be compulsory. Preparation for this change had been made by Royal Injunctions, issued on July 31, 1547. The twenty-second of these Injunctions is in these terms:—

Cup restored to laity.

Confession no longer compulsory.

> Also, Because those persons which be sick and in peril of death be oftentimes put in despair by the craft and subtilty of the devil, who is then most busy, and especially with them that lack the knowledge, sure persuasion, and steadfast belief, that they may be made partakers of the great and

[1] Blunt's Annotated Prayer-Book, p. xxi.

[2] Foxe, vol. v. p. 550, and Appendix x., No. xx., and vol. viii. p. 715.

infinite mercy which Almighty God of His most bountiful goodness, and mere liberality, without our deserving, hath offered freely to all persons that putteth their full trust and confidence in him: therefore that this damnable vice of despair may be clearly taken away, and firm belief, and steadfast hope surely conceived of all their parishioners, being in any danger, they shall learn and have always in a readiness such comfortable places and sentences of Scripture as do set forth the mercy, benefits, and goodness of Almighty God towards all penitent and believing persons, that they may at all times (when necessity shall require) promptly comfort their flock with the lively word of God, which is the only stay of man's conscience.

Prevalence of despondency.

Dr Corrie, in his preface to the Homilies (p. viii), has shown that this "despair" was very prevalent, and is mentioned in other ways as characterising this period of transition (see above, p. 30). Nor is this to be wondered at. Writing some twenty years before, Tyndale, in his 'Obedience of a Christian Man,' depicts the bondage of the Confessional:—

How sore a burden, how cruel a hangman, how grievous a torment, yea, and how painful an hell is this ear-confession unto men's consciences! For the people are brought in belief, that without that they cannot be saved; insomuch that some fast certain days in the year, and pray certain superstitious prayers all their lives long, that they may not die without confession. In peril of death, if the priest be not by, the shipmen shrive themselves unto the mast. If any be present, they run then every man into his ear: *but to God's promises they fly not*, for they know them not. . . . If a man die without shrift, many take it for a sign of damnation. Many, by reason of that false belief, die in desperation. . . . Is not this a sore burden, that so weigheth down the soul unto the bottom of hell?[1]

Before Easter 1548 the Privy Council sent to the bishops for distribution an "Order of Communion," framed by the royal commissioners, containing the "exhortation" designed by the Act, 1 Edw. VI. c. 1. It is noteworthy that in that exhortation the invitation to confess relates not to persons who were great sinners, still less to all sinners as such, but—

"If there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in anything, lacking comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned priest, taught in the law of God, and confess and open

[1] Doctrinal Treatises, p. 245.

his sin and grief secretly ; that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort, that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us, as a minister of God and of the Church, he may receive comfort and absolution to the satisfaction of his mind, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness ; requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that doth use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to the priest,"—and *vice versâ*.

Its cure.

Here it will be noticed that the purely subjective "satisfying" and enlightening of the man's own mind is the object proposed, not any alteration of his standing or condition *as in the sight of God*, for that would be just as needful for every one of his neighbours as for himself.[1] Again, as showing that the absolution was derived from the Church, *as such*, not from the priest, as such, it is interesting to observe that the absolution in this Protestant formulary was the lay-absolution directed in the Sarum Missal to be pronounced by the assistants and servers at Mass over the celebrant himself.[2] The introductory words were borrowed from the Lutheran 'Consultation' of Archbishop Hermann. In the First Prayer-Book the same exhortation was retained, but with a significant addition, warning those "thinking to deceive God, who seeth all men's hearts. For neither the absolution of the priest can anything avail them, nor the receiving of this holy sacrament doth anything but increase their damnation."

A yet further modification was made in 1552 in the words—

If any of you which by this means cannot quiet *his own* conscience, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort as his conscience may be relieved ; and that by the ministry of God's word he may receive comfort and the benefit of absolution, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness.

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[1] In the alternative form of exhortation provided in 1552 for "people negligent to come to the H. C." they were not urged to confess, showing that special aid to dejected souls and an opening of their special "grief," rather than proclaiming an ordinary means of grace, was contemplated.

[2] Compare Maskell's 'Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England,' p. 12, with Simmon's 'Lay-folks' Mass-book,' p. 257, and Henderson's 'York Missal,' p. 165.

The "keys" belong to the prophetic office.

Absolution belonged to the office of Nathan the prophet rather than to that of Caiaphas the priest; and the meaning of the "ministry of God's word" is illustrated by Latimer's sermon during this same year, in which he was striving to educate his audience out of their hereditary superstition. He says:—

> But there be peradventure some of you which will say, "The priest can absolve me and forgive me my sins." Sir, I tell thee, the priest or minister, call him what you will, he hath power given unto him from our Saviour to absolve in such wise as he is commanded by Him; but I think ministers be not greatly troubled therewith; for the people seek their carnal liberties, which indeed is not well, and a thing which misliketh God. For I would have them that are grieved in conscience to go to some godly man, which is *able* to minister God's word, and there to fetch his absolution, if he cannot be satisfied in the public *sermon:* it were truly a thing which would do much good. But, to say the truth, there is a great fault in the priests: for they for the most part be *unlearned* and wicked, and seek rather means and ways to wickedness than godliness. But a godly minister, which is *instructed in the word of God*, can and may absolve *in open preaching*, not of his own authority, but in the name of God; for God saith, "I am He that cleanseth thy sins." But I may absolve you as an officer of Christ in the *open pulpit* in this wise: "As many as confess their sins unto God, acknowledging themselves to be sinners, and believe that our Saviour, through His passion, hath taken away their sins, and have an earnest purpose to leave sin; as many, I say, as be thus affectioned, *Ego absolvo vos*, I, as an officer of Christ, as His treasurer, absolve you in His name." This is the absolution I can make by God's word.[1]

The words form an excellent commentary on the new form of absolution introduced in the Second Prayer-Book of Edward VI.; and this substitution of the "ministry of God's word" for the judicial sentence of a "priest" was deliberately reaffirmed at the last revision of the Prayer-Book. The Revision Committee had proposed to strike out the word "comfort" (*bis*), and to reinsert the word "priest"; though even these reactionaries did not propose to replace "sin" instead of "grief" as the matter to be "opened." The Reformation Settlement, however, was deliberately adhered to, and the "minister" finally supplanted the priest. The evangelical "ministry of reconciliation" consisted in reconciling man to God, not in reconciling God to man.

[1] Sermons of Bishop Latimer, p. 423.

Hooker sums up the Reformation doctrine of Absolution by saying, "It doth not really take away sin, but only *ascertain us* of God's most gracious and merciful pardon." Again: "As for the ministerial sentence of private absolution, it can be no more than a declaration of what God hath done: it hath but the force of the prophet Nathan's absolution—God hath taken away thy sins."[1] Unhappily, at first, the number of educated evangelical preachers was extremely limited, and to meet the case of "unpreaching ministers" the Office of the Visitation of the Sick provided for such "blind guides" a regular form, which it was hoped might be serviceable. But any one who will take the trouble to compare the language of the "Homily of Repentance," and of the 113th Canon, with that of the exhortation in the Communion Service, and of the Visitation of the Sick, will see that private absolution (which is only authorised in two exceptional cases) has for its object, not the alteration of the sinner's condition in the sight of God, but in his own sight. For it is not the great sinner but the morbidly penitent believer, full of "scruple and doubtfulness," who has not yet a "full trust in God's mercy," and who, therefore, seeks "consolation and ease of mind," for whose "comfort" private absolution is permitted, "if he humbly and heartily desire it." Its use is, as Hooker says (§ 17), "to ascertain timorous and doubtful minds in their own particular, ease them of their scrupulosities, leave them settled in peace, and satisfied touching the mercy of God towards them." Sacerdotalists, on the other hand, seek to "trouble" the conscience, and to stir up that very "scruple and doubtfulness" which it is the purpose of evangelical absolution to allay.[2] The infinitely merciful God is always more ready to forgive than we are to ask Him, and "while we are yet a great way off the Father runneth forth to meet" us. Sinful man, judging of God's goodness by his own grudging heart, cannot realise to himself the freedom of the

[1] Eccl. Pol., Bk. VI. vi. 4, 8.

[2] "We labour to instruct men in such sort, that every soul which is wounded with sin may learn the way how to cure itself; they, clean contrary, would make all souls seem incurable unless the priest have a hand in them."—Hooker, Eccl. Pol., Bk. VI. vi. 2.

offered pardon; and since it is necessary that he should have, not only a "historical" but a "lively faith in God's mercy through Christ" towards his own soul ("for he that feareth is not made perfect in love, because fear hath torment"), the Church assures the doubting penitent of her authority to absolve not only him, but "all sinners who truly repent and believe in" Christ, "in the name"—*i.e.*, by the authority and on behalf—of the Holy Trinity.

The twin foundations of Protestant reform.

Meantime the bold proclamation of the doctrines of Justification by Faith (published by Cranmer in his 'Homily of Salvation,' though denounced by Gardiner as full of errors), and the reformed rule of faith which refused to accept tradition as a source of revelation co-ordinate with Holy Scripture, were put into the very forefront of the battle among the "Articles of Religion," and in the honest acceptance of these standards the downfall of all Roman superstitions was inevitably involved. Mary's accession burned *into* men's memories the loveless cruelty of that paganised debasement of Christianity which the Papacy had brought back, and at the same time burned *out* much of the dross by which the earlier movement under Edward had been weakened and disgraced. When Elizabeth came to the throne, martyrdom and exile had done their work. It is sometimes said that Elizabeth herself and a section of her people desired to bring back the "English Interim," or the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI. But of that alleged preference there is not a particle of *contemporary* evidence. The only thing known for certain is that Geste (one of the highest Churchmen among Elizabeth's bishops) advocated reforms even more sweeping than those of the Second Prayer-Book, and that all the Elizabethan bishops were content to wear only the "Episcopal surplice" or rochet, with the customary outdoor dress of a bishop—viz., his chimere and scarf. No other dress of ministration was ordinarily worn, though on State occasions and in "great churches" the Epistoler and Gospeller wore copes to match the state dress of the "Principal minister." The altars were thrown down and replaced by honest tables, and neither party was then willing to confuse and mix together the Romish Mass with the Christian Lord's

Supper as in the "mingle-mangle" "Order of Communion" of 1548. The Romish priests said their Mass in secret, and naturally refused to desecrate the consecrated ornaments of their "sacrifice" by employing them in the Protestant State-service: on the other hand, the Protestant clergy loathed the associations which clung to the discarded "sacrificial vestments" of the Mass which had "sacrificed" their forefathers in the faith. On neither hand was there ever the smallest wish to don the ornaments of the mass-priest when celebrating Holy Communion. Nor can it be shown that anywhere (even in Elizabeth's own chapel) the alleged restoration of mass-gear ever took place. By her first Act of Parliament the supremacy of the Crown was reaffirmed in terms even more full and ample than under Henry; while by her second, the Reformed Service-book, which was left "at the *death* of Edward," was restored with merely verbal alterations of no moment. That Settlement abides in substance to this day.

Supremacy of the Crown reasserted and "established."

The laity were not deterred by the unanimous opposition of the bishops from effecting this reform in the "Church," and they restored the legal protection which an appeal to the Sovereign from the action of ecclesiastical judges thenceforth secured to the meanest peasant. The supremacy of the Crown meant the supremacy of law, order, and justice, secured and vindicated by the Supreme Civil Executive of the nation, and it was no mere "personal" attribute of this individual or that. Judgments, however "spiritual," need the civil sword in order to their practical efficacy and enforcement, and the English Reformers did but "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" by placing the clergy under the control of the Sovereign. The clergy-church has always striven to gain supremacy precisely on this very ground, that only *one* dominant power can have any real "jurisdiction." But the Reformation Settlement consisted in guaranteeing ordered freedom to the Church only on the basis of adherence to the Protestant Formularies, which (though drafted by clergymen) were in fact enacted by the laity. To that Settlement it is our highest wisdom loyally to adhere.

INDEX.

Absolution, 73, 74, 208 *et seq.;* Scriptural doctrine, 209; "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth," *ib.*, 209, 210; "Whosesoever sins ye shall remit," 73, 74, 210, 211 *et seq.*, 255; priestly, from sins, unknown for twelve hundred years, 228; modern misinterpretation, 233; the substitution of the indicative form, 252; St Augustine, 73, 219, 220; Hooker, 471; Latimer, 470; Lightfoot, 210; William of Paris (1248), 252; Bishop John Wordsworth, 210.

Act for the Submission of the Clergy, 295, 447.

Act of Union with Scotland (1706), 296.

African Civilisation Society, 384.

Agnosticism, 430.

Altar. See Holy Communion.

Ambrose, St, 58.

America, Anglican Church, 305, 308, 309; Y.M.C. Associations, 393.

Anglican Communion, branches of, 305, 308, 314, 329; parish councils (abroad), 314.

Anglo-Indians of the evangelical school, 373.

Apostle, the word, 113.

Apostolical succession. See Episcopacy.

Archbishop of Canterbury's mission to the Assyrians, 111.

Aristides' 'Apology,' 83,84,104-106.

Athanasian Creed, optional in Church of Ireland, 362.

Athanasius, St, 56.

Athenagoras (the 'Supplicatio'), 128.

Atonement, the nature of, 437-439.

"Attrition," 229.

Augsburg Confession, 19 *et seq.*, 453; Art. 2. Respecting original sin, 25 *et seq.;* Art. 3. Actual sins and original sin alike included under the one sacrifice, 33, 34; Art. 4. Justification for Christ's sake through faith, 35; Art. 6. Good works a result, 37; Art. 7. On the true unity of the Church, 141; Art. 20. A famous passage, 40-42; papal confutation, 28, 29, 34 *et seq.;* papal misconceptions, 37 *et seq.;* resemblance of English Articles to, 26.

Augsburg, Diet of (1530), 18.

Auricular confession. See Confession (Auricular).

Authority and obedience, 11-18; Dr Hawkins, of Oriel, 14-16; Dr Jackson, 15.

Bacon, Lord, 69.
Baptism, 46.
Barnabas, Epistle of, 86-88 ; abolition of sacrifices, 87 ; silence on the Lord's Supper, *ib.*
Belgian Church, 329.
Benefices Act (1898), 302, 303.
Benson, Archbishop, 310, 311, 318 ; on Cranmer, 456 ; on Cyprian, 307 ; on the word "Protestant" (Ireland, 1896), 1-3.
Bernard, St, 58.
Bible, authority of, 57-59 ; authority of, not disputed by Roman Catholic Church, 25 ; the rule of faith, 456 ; value of Old Testament, 415 ; Luther on Bible and conscience, 12, 13 ; Athanasius on, 263 ; authority of the, St Ambrose on, 58 ; authority of the, St Bernard on, *ib.* ; authority of the, Cyprian on, 261, 262 ; Goode's 'Divine Rule' (1856), 261 ; Gregory the Great on, 265 ; Œcumenius, 262 ; authority of (Dr Moule), 260 *et seq.* ; fresh discoveries on, 160.
Bossuet on the Reformation, 149.
Butler, Bishop, 160, 367 ; on reason, 426 ; on the conscience, 235.

Caird, Principal, on the origin of intelligence, 430.
Calvinistic ideas, 18, 20.
Canonised sacerdotalism, 436.
Carthage, Council of (256 A.D.), 261, 262.
Cathedrals and disestablishment, 360, 364.
Catholic Church (see also Unity), 129 - 162 ; origin of word "Church" (ἐκκλησία), 130 ; meaning of the term, 131, 132 ; first found in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans, 131 ; the term, Canon Dixon on, 23 ; theories of Catholicity—(1) Episcopal, 139 ; (2) non-Episcopal, 141 ; Augsburg Confession, *ib.* ; Westminster Confession, *ib.* ; Evangelical Free Church Catechism, 142 ; Catholicity in the English Church, three views, 143-145 *et seq.* ; an ideal, 146 ; tendency to restriction, 133 ; true test of Catholicity, 150 ; benefits of true Catholicity, 160 ; Ignatius on, 95, 131 ; Isaac Barrow on, 140 ; Bishop Harold Browne on the visible Church (19th Art.), *ib.*
Catholicity of Protestants, 22.
Census, religious, 320.
Charles, Mrs, influence of her works, 382.
Charlesworth, Maria, wide influence of her works, 382.
Christianity, the truth of the Christian idea, 418 ; unites religion and ethics, 432 ; and Judaism compared, 414.
"Church," origin of the word, 130.
Church and State—general relation of a Church to the State, 326, 327 ; types of Church and State relationships, 327-329.
Church Building Act (1831), 292.
Church of England (see Ecclesiastical courts ; Prayer-book), origin of, 286, 287 ; as by law established, 325-353 ; a Protestant Church, 51 ; origin of services, 163, 164 ; commination service, 246 ; early British Church, 286 ; general confessions and absolutions, 247 ; legal presumption of Church membership, 291, 292 *et seq.* ; teaching concerning the confessional, &c., 245 *et seq.*, 257 ; teaching of the homilies, 253 ; teaching in regard to the Holy Communion, 70 *et seq.* ; teaching before the Reformation, 453 ; Church property, 348 ; judiciary, 333-339.
Church of Ireland, 305, 308, 309, 358-363 ; Church patronage, 361,

362; convocations, 360 *et seq.*; general synod, 361; national convention of 1870, 360; synods, *ib. et seq.*; diocesan synods, 319; revision of prayer-book, 362; vestries, 313-315, 361.
Church of Scotland—its organisation (executive, legislative, judiciary), 354-358; the Established Presbyterian Church, 309, 354-358.
Church patronage, 301.
Church property, 348.
Church reform, opposed by the clergy, 444; promoted by the laity, 445.
Church Reform League, 319.
Clement of Alexandria on truth, 410.
Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians, 88-92; Lightfoot on, 89-91; mention of two orders only — presbyters and deacons, 89; no priesthood, 92; use of Jewish phraseology, 90; 'Second Epistle' (so-called), 106, 107.
Coleridge on faith, 427.
Colet, 136.
Colonies, English Church in, 305, 308, 309.
Commination service, 246.
Comte on Protestantism, 272.
Confessio Tetrapolitana. See Augsburg Confession.
Confession, Auricular. See Absolution. The "Confessional" defined, 234, 256; effects of the irruption of the barbarians, 226; private confession, first step towards, A.D. 440-461, 225, 256; not ordered as a necessity, even in Romish Church, till 1215, 74; Pope Innocent III. institutes the confessional (1215 A.D.), 228, 256; first authorised and enjoined at the Lateran Council of 1215, 208, 227, 256; Gratian's *Decretum*, 12th century, 227; protests against it by great Romish authorities, 73; rejection by Church of England in the 16th century, 25-27; confession, 466-473; ceases to be compulsory in England, 467; "confession" called the second part of "penitence," 230; confession in the English Church even exceeds the restrictions of the Church of Rome, 230; Church of England's teaching, 244-255; why retained by Lutherans, 49, 50; exceptional cases, 248, 249; farce of, 237, 238; modern confession compared with that of old, 231; Scriptural doctrine, 208 *et seq.*; unknown for 500 years, 228; unscriptural, unprimitive, uncatholic, 73; unheard of for twelve centuries, 73; summary, 255.
Confession (Auricular)—*Injurious results*, 234 *et seq.*, 242; weakening of conscience, 234, 235; of modesty, 236; of truthfulness, 237, 239, 240; encourages crime, 237; spiritual arrogance, 238; injurious to the confessor, *ib.*, 239; encourages inordinate affection, 240, 241; impurity of mind, 241; engenders national loss of virility, *ib.*; dominance of unpatriotic interests, 242; bondage of, 468; evils to the family: overthrow of home life, 243, 244; testimony of French priest (1898), *ib.*
Confession (Auricular) — *Authorities quoted.* Authorities concerning, 258; St Augustine, 73, 254; St Chrysostom, 222-225; St Cyril, 213; Gregory Nyssen, 216, 219; St Jerome, 73; Origen, 221; Tertullian, 73; Archbishop Theodore's Penitential (A.D. 668), 227; Second Council of Châlons (A.D. 813), *ib.*; Achilli, 231; Bourrier (Mons.),

245; Farrar, 72-74; St Francis de Sales, 245; Isabel of Castile, 243; James II., *ib.;* Meyrick, 207-258; Milman, 227; Latimer, 470; Liguori's 'Moral Theology,' 229, 233, 237, 244; Michelet, *re*, 231; Pope Leo I., rescript of, 225; Lord Salisbury on, 241; Church Manuals, Archbishop Tait on, 54; Tyndale, 468; Wheatley, 74; Bishop John Wordsworth on, 245.
Conscience, 11-14; and the confessional, 234, 235; guidance of, 235; J. S. Mill on Protestantism and the, 272.
Continent, episcopacy on the, 137; reformed churches on, *ib.*, 140, 143.
Contrition and attrition, 229.
Controversy, R. Baxter on, 75; J. Wesley on, *ib.*
Convocations. See under Church of Ireland.
Convocations, 296, 307, 340-346; canons of, 345, 346; no sole right of legislation, 448; theoretical appeal to, 448; Houses of, assert Protestant character of Church of England (1689), 51; reform of, 305, 318, 319 *et seq.*
Corpus Christi, procession of, 19.
Council of—see *the place-name.*
Councils (first Council), 307, 308.
Cranmer, 455 *et seq.;* his wide reading, 456; condemns the teaching of the "Real" presence, 457; his immortal work on the Lord's Supper, 460; our debt to, 456.
Cromwell and the ecclesiastical courts, 443.
Crown, the, 350, 351; as a link between Church and, 330, 331; control of, 347, 348; its ecclesiastical appointments, 347, 348; prerogatives of the, 451; supremacy of, 447, 449, 473; titular position of, 331; veto of (Convocation), 343.
Cyprian, St, sacerdotalism arises with, 63.

Deacons, Clement's Epistle, 89; Hermas, 114; Ignatius on, 99.
Declaration of Rights, 290.
Delegates, Court of. See Ecclesiastical Courts.
Denison, Ditcher *v.*, case of, 78, 79.
Despair of the Middle Ages, 29-31.
Development, principle of, 158.
Diocesan conferences, 296, 319-321, 343
Diocesan Courts, 361.
Diocesan Synods, provincial and general, 305; Church of Ireland, 313, 314.
Diognetus, Epistle to, 117, 118.
Disestablishment, 310; its attendant evils, 363, 364; Mr Gladstone, 326; G. W. Russell, *ib.*
Dissenters. See Nonconformists.
Ditcher *v.* Denison, case of, 78, 79.
Docetic works, literature of, 102.
Docetics, 100-103; Ignatius on, 100, 101.

Early Christian literature, modern discoveries of, throwing fresh light on important questions—Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (1875), 83; so-called 'Second Epistle of Clement,' &c. (1875), *ib.*, 106, 107; 'The Diatessaron of Tatian' or the Life of Christ (1876-88), 83; Aristides' 'Apology' (1878-1889), *ib.*, 84; 'The Didachè, or, Teaching of the Twelve Apostles' (1883), 83, 107-114.
Eastern Churches, 134, 135, 138, 139, 143, 144.
Ecclesiastical courts, 333-339, 441; (16th century) foreign in origin, 442, 449; spiritual courts (pre-Reformation), disreputable character of, 442; what is a "spirit-

ual court?" 353; "spiritual" courts not infallible, *ib.*; archbishops' courts, appeal from, to crown, 446; Ecclesiastical Courts Bill, 318; laymen as judges, 295, 447; Court of Arches, 336; Court of Delegates, 335, 336, 444; Privy Council, bishops and the, 337; decisions of, 351; ecclesiastical appellative jurisdiction, 336-339; its fifty years' work, 364; Royal Commission (1830), 336, 337.

Eclectic Society, 370, 371.

Edward VI. and the Reformation, 450, 451.

Egypt, religion of, 406, 407.

ἐκκλησία, original meaning, 130.

Elizabeth, Queen, 331, 332, 450, 451; answer concerning the Holy Sacrament, 68; no proof that Elizabeth desired to undo the work of the Reformation, 473.

Elliott, Charlotte, influence of her hymns, 382.

England, Church of. See Church of England.

Episcopacy, 152; apostolical succession, 85, 115, 128; bishops independent of the Church of Rome, 136; on the Continent, 137; appointment of, 347, 348; members of Privy Council, 339; election of bishops in Irish Church, 361, 362; Clement's Epistle, 89, 90; presbyters at Corinth styled bishops, 89; Ignatius on, 99, 100, 269; Hermas, 114; Cosin, J., 281; Dimock on, 278; Lightfoot on, *ib.*; Dr Moule, 269, 279-281.

Erasmus, 136.

Ethics united with religion through Christianity, 432.

"Eucharist," "Sacrifice of the": phrase first used by Irenæus, 127.

Europe divided into two camps, 24.

Evangelical Free Church Catechism, 142.

Evangelical Movement in the Church of England, 365-398; definition, 366; its continuity, 365; early fathers of the movement, 368; Evangelical Societies — *three-quarters of a million sterling* annually raised, 398; over £21,000,000 raised in the nineteenth century, *ib.*; American churches' debt to Evangelical Movement, 368; Evangelical Movement in India, 380; Evangelical women-writers, influence of, 382; measures due to Evangelical Movement, 396, 397; Foreign Missions, reaction on moral and spiritual life of England, 376; Bible Society—founded 1804, 378; its receipts (£13,000,000) up to 1899, 393; circulates over *one hundred and sixty million* Bibles and parts of the Bible, 378; Church Pastoral Aid Society, 381; Church Missionary Society, 371-376; raises *twelve millions sterling*, 375; Church Pastoral Aid Society — *two and three-quarter millions sterling* receipts, 393; Lancashire operatives' gratitude to Lord Shaftesbury, 389; London City Mission, 385; £2,000,000 receipts, 393; Lunacy Bill, 1845, due to Lord Shaftesbury, 388; missionary bishops, 373; Missionary Training College, 372; National Society for Church Schools, 378; Missions, religious, Evangelical, 395; Parker Society, 1840 (7000 members), 385; ragged schools in London, 388; reform of the criminal law, 379; Religious Tract Society — founded 1799, 378; £2,000,000 subscriptions during the century, 393; circulates 33,000,000,000 publications, 378; slave trade, abolition of, 379; Sunday Schools and

Raikes, 369, 394; temperance work, 394; Young Men's Christian Association, 385; its jubilee (*half a million* members of Y.M.C. Associations in fifty years), 391; Y.M.C. Associations in America, 393; Evangelical succession of noteworthy men, 396; *Anglo-Indians of the Evangelical School*, 373; Argyll, Duke of, on Lord Shaftesbury, 387; Bickersteth, 372; Sir Fowell Buxton (1844), 379, 385; Richard Cecil, 370; Earl of Chichester, 373; Clapham sect, 370, 378; Corrie, 380; William Cowper, 369; Charles Grant, and chaplains for India, 380; Charles Hoare, 385; Howard, 368; B. Jenks, 367; Zachary Macaulay, 379; Dean Hugh MacNeile, noted evangelical preacher, 385; Henry Martyn, 380; Canon Henry Melvill, his influence, 386; Milner, 368; David Nasmith helps to found London City Mission, 385; John Newton, 368; Florence Nightingale, 386; Dr Overton on the Clapham sect, 369; Josiah Pratt, 370; Raikes, 369; Romaine, 368; Sir S. Romilly, 379; Salisbury, Lord, on Lord Shaftesbury, 388; Thomas Scott, 368; Seeley, 367; Lord Shaftesbury, his public services to the State, 386-391; Charles Simeon, 370 *et seq.*; procures appointment of chaplains in India, 380; Sir James Stephen quoted, 367, 378, 391, 396; Canon Hugh Stowell, noted Evangelical preacher, 385; Teignmouth, Lord, 378; Thomas Thomason, 380; Henry Thornton, 369; John Thornton, 368; Toplady, *ib.*; Henry Venn, *ib.*; John Venn, *ib.*, 369, 371; Henry Venn, the grandson, 372; John Wesley, 368; G. Whitefield, *ib.*; Bishop Wilberforce, 373; William Wilberforce, 369, 372, 379; Sir George Williams, founder of the Young Men's Christian Association, 392; Daniel Wilson, 372.

Faith (see Justification), Augustine on, 41.
Faith and Works, 35-37.
Family life, influence of the confessional on, 243, 244.
Figurative language, 127.
France, Church in, 329; results of the confessional in, 242, 243.
Francis, St, 56.

Gasquet, Dr, value of his work, 460.
German influence and the Reformation, 459.
Gnostics, 122-124.
Goode, Rev. W., writings of, 80.
Gore, Canon, 'Essays on Church Reform,' 303.
Greek Church, and the teaching of transubstantiation, 84.
Greek ideal of life, 408.
Greek philosophy affected by oriental influences, 407, 408.

Halifax, Lord, concerning the *Reformatio legum*, 449.
Harrison, Rev. J., works of, 81.
Havergal, Frances, influence of her hymns, 382.
Hebert, Rev. C., works of, 81.
Hegel, 400, 402, 407, 422.
Hemans, Felicia, influence of writing, 382.
Henry VIII., 15, 16, 331, 332, 341 *et seq.*; never a Protestant, 450; his divorce only incidental to the real issues, 441, 447, 448; his true motives, 451, 452; his aim to restrain his own clergy, 441, 451; Henry and the Lutheran envoys, 450; summary of his reforms, 449.
Heresy, nature of, 133.

Hermas, 'The Shepherd of Hermas,' 107, 114.
Holy Communion, 163-266; the Lord's Supper: as a memorial, 171-179; as a covenant sign, 179-185; as a sacramental feast, 185-197; as a Eucharist, 198-203; as the communion of saints, 203-206; *ἀνάμνησις*, 171-177; attendance at, affected by the confessional, 245; beautiful liturgy of the Eucharist (Didachè), 108, 109; children's Eucharist, 175; the "cup" restored to the English laity, 467; 'Didachè, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,' 83, 107-114, 165, 166, 278; reservation, 166; Albertinus, 193; Aristides, 104-106; Aristides, "no sacrifice," 104; Athenagoras, Supplication (no reference to Eucharistic sacrifice), 128; Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians, 91, 92; 'Second Epistle of Clement' (so-called), 106, 107; St Bernard, 196, 197; Cyprian, 112, 113, 167, 169, 170; Cyril of Jerusalem, 167; The 'Didachè' (a "most important contribution to the knowledge of the Eucharistic question"), 107-114, 165; 'Epistle to Diognetus' (no reference to the Eucharist), 117, 118; Docetics, 100-103; Hermas: 'Shepherd of Hermas' contains no reference, 107; Ignatius, 97 *et seq.*; Irenæus, 119-128; St Jerome, 189; Justin Martyr, 115-117, 166; Minutius Felix, the "Octavius" (no reference to the Eucharist), 118; Nestorian liturgy, 110; Polycarp, no reference to it, 103; Tertullian, 188.
Cudworth, Dr, 186; Farrar, 65-72; Ferus, the Franciscan, 188, 189; Johnson, John, 185, 186; Lightfoot, 169; Luther, 192; Monk, Dr, 188; Wace, Dr, 170; Waterland, Dr, 183, 188, 192, 197, 199; Zwinglian view, 66-68.
Holy Communion—*Altar*, *θυσιαστήριον* occurs sixteen times in New Testament, but never applied to the Lord's table, 64; St Augustine, 65; St Chrysostom, *ib.*; Ignatius, 95-99; Irenæus, 123; Julian, Emperor, 65; Polycarp, 103; Ridley on 'Altars of Idolatry,' 465; Westcott, 64, 65.
Holy Communion—*Altar* (Heb. xiii. 10), Leo the Great, 64; Rupert of Deutz, *ib.*; St Ambrose, *ib.*; St Thomas Aquinas, *ib.*
Holy Communion—*Consubstantiation*, 68, 456; theory of consubstantiation rejected, 460.
Holy Communion—*Mass*, 459 *et seq.*; doctrine of, first authorised at the Lateran Council of 1215, 208; its dominant idea, 463; canon of the, 458; teaching of the, 34, 46-49, 202, 207; mass and communion, the insuperable difference, 464-466; first prayer-book and the mass, 464; Ridley on the, 457, 465, 466.
Holy Communion—*Real Presence*, 46, 49, 84, 85, 196, 455 *et seq.*; condemned by Cranmer, 457-461; "*in* those Holy Mysteries" explained by Cranmer, 458; Gardiner's efforts concerning the "Real Presence," 459; Luther on, 19; Ridley on the, 457; Jeremy Taylor on the, 466; its rejection, a turning-point of the Reformation, 459.
Holy Communion—*Sacrifice*, 168, 169, 177-179, 199 *et seq.*, 277, 278; Irenæus on "the sacrifice of the Eucharist," 126, 127.
Holy Communion—*Transubstantia-*

tion, 84, 191, 192, 208, 453, 454 *et seq.*; doctrine not formally accepted by the Church of Rome till the Lateran Council of 1215, 66; officially promulgated, 227; Test . . . Acts, 291; upheld by Henry VIII., 450; Dr Aldrich, 71; St Augustine, 66; Bellarmine, 67; Billuart, *ib.*; Chillingworth, 70; Gregory VII. and Berengar, 68; Hooker, 71; Jeremy Taylor, *ib.*; Luther, 68, 69; Newman, 67; Thirlwall, 71; Waterland, *ib.*

Hooker, 82, 268; on priest and presbyter, 63.

Huguenot communion, 281.

Idolatry founded on the "Real Presence," 462.

ἱερεύς, 59-61, 63, 92.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, and his Epistles, 92-102; characteristics of, 93; and the three orders, 94, 99; and modern controversy, 101.

Incense, Irenæus on, 121, 126.

India, Anglo-Indians of the Evangelical school, 373; churches in, 327; its philosophies and religions, 405, 406, 408.

Individualism, true and false, 276.

Innocent III. *establishes the theory of transubstantiation*, 68.

Instrumentum appellationis (1529), 9 *et seq.*; Gieseler, 10; Hase (Karl von), 11, 12.

Ireland, Church of. See Church of Ireland.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons — his work 'Against Heresies,' 119-128.

James, St, 282, 283.

Jebb, Professor, 310.

Jesuits, crimes of, accounted for, 236.

Jewish services, 163.

Jews, Cromwell and the, 289; Evangelical work amongst the, 381.

Judaism — its failure, 417; its unique place in the evolution of religion, 412 *et seq.*; contrasted with Christianity, 414.

Justification by faith: an abbreviated expression of, 39; Cranmer on, 472.

Justin Martyr, works of, 115-117.

Kind (German), significance of the word, 43.

Laity, Cyprian, 307.

Laity, no powers as church laymen, 302; rightful power of, *ib.*; functions of, *ib. et seq.*; right to a voice in *all* matters, 306; need for more legal power, 321.

Lateran Council (1215), 66; its teachings repudiated by the Church of England, 246, 247.

Laud, "a Protestant," 54.

Lay representation. See Convocations; diocesan conferences; ecclesiastical courts; parish councils; parishes; ruridecanal conferences; synods; vestries.

Lay representation, 285-323, 444, 446, 447; church membership defined, 293; church officials, 317; original powers of the laity, 294 *et seq.*; present status and powers, 286-302; parochial or congregational? 310; Lay Legislative Assembly, 318-321; Nonconformists, 311; plural voting, 310, 311, 313; qualifications, 285, 286, 293; tests considered: of confirmation, 312; test of communicants, *ib.*, 314, 317; tests: church membership, 317, 318; women, franchise of, 313-315; Church of Ireland, 359 *et seq.*; Church of Scotland, 354 *et seq.*

Legislation and the English Church, 340 *et seq.*

Littledale, 101.

Lloyd, Bishop, on the Reformation, 450.
Local Government Act, 1894, 315.
London City Mission, £2,000,000 receipts, 393.
Lord's Supper, The. See Holy Communion.
Luther. See also Holy Communion—*Consubstantiation.*
Luther, 5, 9, 12, 31, 32, 57, 136, 453, 457 *et seq.*; his prayers, 43-45; and Henry VIII., 450.
Lutheran Church, chief symbolic document, 20.
Lutheran influence in the thirty-nine Articles, 456; teaching concerning the sacrament abandoned, 458, 460.
Lutherans, test of exclusion from Church of England, 457.

Married life and the confessional, 243, 244.
Materialism, 430.
Medieval "Catholicism," 453.
Medieval Church, 329; summary of its work, its failure, 29; Erasmus on, 30; and the laity, 294; power of the clergy in England, 441; strong anti-clerical feeling in England, 442; "a State" (Maitland), 442.
Medieval ecclesiastical courts, scandals of, 353.
Medieval theology, bad philosophy the basis of, 454.
Melanchthon, 11, 19, 29, 457.
Mill, J. S., on Protestantism, 272.
Minutius Felix, his 'Octavius,' 118.
Monastic vows, mischief of, 50.
Morality, laws of, 439.
More, 136.
More, Hannah, influence of her works; *two millions* circulated, &c., 382.

National Churches, fundamental principle of, 15.
National degeneration, and the confessional, 241, 242.
Nestorian liturgy, 110.
New Parishes Act, 1856, 293.
Newman, 154-156; influenced by Evangelical teaching, 154; principle of development, 158, 159.
Niger expedition, 1841, 384.
Nonconformists, 311; church property and the law, 350; not free from State control, 349, 350; position of, in England, 349, 350.

Obedience. See Authority.
Original sin (Augsburg Confession), 25.
Oxford movement, 154-156.

Pantheism, 455.
Parish Councils, 303, 315-317 *et seq.*
Parishes, lay element in, 297; modern parochial changes, 298 *et seq.*; New Parishes Acts, 311; parochial organisation, 310; plural voting, 300.
Parker Society, 80.
Parliament, influence of, in Church affairs prior to the Reformation, 294.
Pascal on the confessional, 229.
Pelagians, 26, 27.
Penitence as defined, 229-233; public penitential discipline of the early Church, 215 *et seq.*
Penitents, four orders of, 217.
Philosophy and religion — bad philosophy the basis of medieval theology, 454.
Philosophy of religion, 399-440.
Pilgrim father, a, 160.
Political life and the confessional, 242, 243.
Polycarp's epistle to the Church at Philippi, 103, 104.
Pope, why except the? 157, 158.
Portugal, Church of, 329.
Prayer-book, the, 346; chiefly due

to Cranmer, 456 ; Dr Gasquet on the, 460 ; first prayer-book, 459, 472 ; its failings, 458, 459 ; first prayer-book and the mass, 464 ; Latin translation, 1670, and the word "priest," 60 ; revision of, in Church of Ireland, 362.

Pre-reformation times. See Medieval.

Presbyter, penitentiary, 215, 217 *et seq.*

Presbyterian Church of Scotland. See Church of Scotland.

Presbyters, 60 ; Hermas, 114 ; Ignatius on, 100 ; Clement's epistle, 89, 90 ; 'Second Epistle of Clement' (so-called), 107 ; Hooker, 63.

Price Hughes, 143.

Priest and priesthood—priests, 152, 435 ; derived from "presbyter" or "elder," 63 ; Levitical pretensions, 115 ; priesthood of *all* Christians, 62 ; use in English Church, 60 ; Saint Paul, 61, 62 ; Clement of Alexandria, 62 ; Irenæus, *ib.* ; Ignatius, 63, 99 ; Tertullian, 64 ; Didachè, 114, 115 ; Farrar, 60-65 ; Justin Martyr, 62 ; Hooker, 63 ; Lightfoot, 62, 63, 151, 152.

Priesthood — *Sacerdotalism*, 151, 152, 277, 436 ; arises with St Cyprian, 63.

Privy Council. See Ecclesiastical Courts.

Protestant, the word : use of by Laud and Cosin, 54 ; Archbishop Benson on the word, 1-3 ; general meaning, 3-5 ; misapprehension of the word by Burke, 3, 4 ; a post-Augustan word, 4 ; religious sense of the word, 5 *et seq.* ; Canon Dixon, 24.

Protestant ideal—its development, 45 ; reform, foundation of, 472.

Protestantism — conscience, 272 ; essence of, 14 ; germ of Protestant principles, 20 ; true principles of, 435 ; no negation, 436 ; what it is, 16 ; principles of, 272 ; Dean Field, 23 ; J. S. Mill, 272.

Protestants — nature of the great struggle (Germany), 24 ; Catholic, 22-24 ; Cosin, 54.

Protestation of April 19, 1529, 9 *et seq.*

Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, 293, 317.

Purgatory, 233.

Pusey, Dr, 77-83 ; 'Catena Patrum,' 77-79, 82, 83 ; 'Manual for Confessors,' 240.

Real Presence. See under Holy Communion.

Reformatio legum not evidence of law, 449.

Reformation, the, 135, 136, 440-473 ; two reformations, political and religious, in England, 441 ; the Reformation (of religion) dates *not* from Henry VIII., but from Edward VI. and Elizabeth, 450 ; the great Reformation Statute (25 Henry VIII., c. 19), 444, 447 ; the Reformation essentially a *lay* movement, 445 ; spirit of, 42 ; clergy (1534) no desire to repudiate the Pope, 445 ; rejection of the theory of the "Real Presence" a turning-point of the Reformation, 459 ; the terms of Bishop Shaxton's recantation fix precisely the official belief of the English Church prior to the Reformation, 452 ; settlement, 440-473.

Religion, beginnings of, 402 *et seq.* ; mechanical, W. H. M. H. Aitken on, 284 ; philosophy of, 399-440 ; tests of true, Dr Moule, 259-284.

Religious government, ideal of, 18.

Responsibility, personal, and the confessional, 245, 246.

Ridley, 457, 461 *et seq.*

Right of private judgment, 13.
Roman, early, religion, 409.
Roman Catholic ideal, the, 435.
Roman theory and the ancient liturgies, 459.
Rome, appeals to, 333-335, 444.
Ruridecanal conferences, 296.
Russell, G. W., regarding Ridley's views of the "Mass," 466.

Sacerdos. See Priest.
Sacerdotalism. See Priest, &c.
Sacraments, use of, 46.
Saint Peter calls himself "a presbyter," 61.
Salisbury, Lord, on the confessional, 241.
"Satisfaction" (penitence) of to-day's system compared with that of old, 232.
Savoy Conference, 1661, and the word "priest," 60.
Scriptures. See Bible.
Selborne, Lord, on appeals, 452.
Sergeant, Rev. E. W., 111.
Shaxton, Bishop, 453, 456, 457.
Simeon, close of his career, 382, 383.
Slave-trade in West Indies, 372.
Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 371, 377.
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 371, 377.
Spiritual life, the, and the Evangelical Movement, 376.
Stephen, Sir James, essay on "The Evangelical Succession," 367.
Stubbs, Bishop, on the character of the original Courts of Spiritual Discipline, 441, 442.
Sunday Schools and the Evangelical Movement, 379, 394.
Synods. See Diocesan Synods.

Tait, Archbishop, institutes the Bishop of London's Fund, 394.
Taylor, Jeremy, on the "Real" presence, 466.
Temple, Archbishop, and the Reformation Settlement (concerning the "Real" presence), 466.
Test and Corporation Acts, 291, 292.
Thyestian banquets, 125, 126.
Toleration Act, 290.
Tolstoi on the experience of life, 429.
Tradition, assertion of authority of, 25, 26.
Trallians, 96, 97, 99.
Trent, Council of, 113, 208; Dean Field on, 23; effect of, regarding the supremacy of the Bible, 25.
Two axioms, 57.

Unity, theories of, 147, 149; Ignatius' ideal, 95, 99; Llewelyn Davies, 150, 153.
Universal Church, 132, 133.

Vestries, 296.
Vincentius of Lerins on the Catholic Faith, 134.

Wales, Church in, 287.
Westcott on individual freedom, 412.
Westminster Confession, 141.
William III., 51.
Witenagemote, the, 294, 328.
Women writers (Evangelicals), influence of, 382.
Words, jugglery of, 455, 456.
Worms, first Diet of, 5, 6, 7; second Diet of, 5, 7-9.

Zwinglian doctrine, 11, 66, 68.

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